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THE
DRAMATIC MIRROR:

CONTAINING THE
HISTORY OF THE STAGE,
FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME;
INCLUDING
A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL ACCOUNT
OF ALL
THE DRAMATIC WRITERS,
FROM 1660;
AND ALSO OF THE MOST
DISTINGUISHED PERFORMERS,
FROM THE DAYS OF SHAKESPEARE TO 1807:
AND A
HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY THEATRES
IN ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND SCOTLAND.
EMBELLISHED WITH SEVENTEEN ELEGANT ENGRAVINGS.

BY THOMAS GILLILAND,

AUTHOR OF DRAMATIC SYNOPSIS, &c. &c.

VOL. II.

—hic alta theatris
Fundamenta locant alij; immanesque columnas
Rupibus excidunt, scenis decora alta futuris.

VIRGIL.

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IN THE MATTER OF THE
REPORTS OF THE SEVERAL BUREAUS

THE
DRAMATIC MIRROR.

A Biographical and Critical Account of the principal Performers, at present belonging to the London Theatres; including a Selection of those Players who distinguished themselves in the last Century: together with an Account of the Life and Talents of Madame Catalani, the principal Actress and Singer at the King's Theatre, Hay-market.

ABINGTON, Mrs.—This celebrated actress, whose maiden name was Barton, made her *debut* at the Hay-market theatre, under the management of Theophilus Cibber, who, in 1758, obtained a license from the Lord Chamberlain to perform plays at that house. She had not attained her seventeenth year, when, encouraged by the high opinion entertained of her talents by the manager, and several judicious critics who had attended her rehearsals in private, she was induced to offer herself as a candidate for public favour, in the character of Miranda, in the comedy of the *Busy Body*. Her success was adequate to the most sanguine expectations of her friends, and she was afterwards engaged in the Bath company, then under the direction of that excellent comedian, the late Mr. King of Drury-lane theatre. At the end of the follow-

ing summer she was seen on the Richmond stage, in one of her principal characters, by Mr. Lacy, one of the then patentees of Old Drury, who immediately engaged her for that theatre. Her first character here was Lady Pliant, in *The Double Dealer*, in which she was received with unbounded applause.

At this time she married Mr. Abington, and deeming her situation by no means eligible, while the characters she aspired to were in the possession of Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Clive, and Mrs. Cibber, she engaged on very advantageous terms with Messrs. Barry and Woodward, who had opened a theatre in Crow-street, Dublin, in opposition to Mr. Sheridan's in Smock-alley.

She performed at both theatres in Dublin; and such was the fame she acquired, that her return to London was courted by Mr. Garrick, on terms which were then considered extravagant. These proposals were accepted on Mr. Garrick's return from his continental excursion, and her first character that season was the Widow Belmour, in *The Way to Keep Him*. From that time to 1782, she performed Lady Fanciful, *Provoked Wife*; *Araminta*, *School for Lovers*; *Belinda*, *All in the Wrong*, &c. with the greatest approbation. She was the original representative of Lady Alton, in *The English Merchant*; *Charlotte*, *Hypocrite*; *Miss Rusport*, *West-Indian*; *Lady Bab Lardoon*, *Maid of the Oaks*; *Roxalana*, *Sultan*; *Lady Teazle*, *School for Scandal*; and *Miss Hoyden*, *Trip to Scarborough*.

A disagreement having taken place between her and the proprietors of Drury-lane, she accepted of very liberal terms from Mr. Harris, and from the season of 1782-3, continued for several years at Covent-garden, performing all her

favourite characters, and several new ones, with the greatest applause.

Having quitted the London boards, she performed only occasionally on the stage; but in 1797-8, resumed her situation at Covent-garden. Her last performance in public was for the benefit of Mr. Pope, in 1799, in *Lady Racket*, *Three Weeks after Marriage*; and May 31, she represented *Lady Fanciful*, at *Brandenburgh House*, the *Margravine of Anspach's* private theatre: *Lady Brute* by the *Margravine*, and *Belinda* by *Miss Berkeley*.

One merit was peculiar to this great actress—articulation. There was a keenness in her utterance of sarcasm, which cannot be conceived by those who never saw her *Beatrice*. In the language of the character—"every word stabbed." King, of the male performers came the nearest to her in brilliant delivery of pointed sentiment.

To her very distinguished public talents, with those of much reading, good sense, and agreeable conversation, let the praise of *private life* be added in all its several duties; which has long endeared her to her friends, and procured her the esteem and protection of the most respectable ranks in society. Her benevolence to distressed merit in any station, and her exemplary charity to those who were pining under the sorrowful vicissitudes of life, were invariably exercised.

BADDELEY, Mr.—In the early part of this gentleman's life he went abroad, and having acquired some knowledge of the French language, he commenced actor at *Drury-lane*, and performed several parts in low comedy, particularly *foreign footmen*, with considerable

appaluse. He was unfortunate in his marriage, and died November 1794, having been taken suddenly ill the preceding evening, when nearly dressed for Moses, in the School for Scandal. He was buried in St. Paul's, Covent-garden.

The following extract from his will, bearing date April 23, 1792, will prove his benevolent attention to the infirmities and distresses of performers :

“ To his faithful friend and companion Mrs. Catherine Strickland, generally called and known by the name of Baddeley, he bequeaths her life's interest in his house in New Store-street, and in his freehold messuages, garden, &c. at Moulsey, in Surrey. After her decease, the above estates, with certain monies to arise from the insurance of an annuity, to go to the society established for the relief of indigent persons belonging to Drury-lane theatre. The house and premises at Mousley to be used as an asylum for decayed actors and actresses, and when the nett produce of the property amounts to 360*l.* per annum, pensions are to be allowed. Especial care to be taken to have the words “Baddeley's Asylum,” in the front of the house. His executors to publish every year his letter, as it appeared in the General Advertiser, April 20, 1790, respecting the disagreement with his unhappy wife, to prevent the world from looking on his memory in the villanous point of view as set forth in certain books, pamphlets, &c. One hundred pounds, three per cent. consolidated bank annuity, which produce three pounds per annum, is left to purchase a Twelfth Cake, with wine and punch, which the performers of Drury-lane theatre are requested to partake of every Twelfth Night in the great green-room.

BANNISTER, JOHN—The biography of this gentleman does not afford that vicissitude which is found to accompany the generality of the profession of the sock and buskin; from not having left that sphere of action for any length of time, where his genius was brought into public notice by the late Mr. Garrick.

This celebrated comedian was born in London, in the year 1761, and is the son of the late Mr. Charles Bannister, a veteran of the stage, who was much respected, and whose vocal powers were once held in universal estimation. The physical endowments of young Bannister were displayed in the days of his childhood, in catching up the shreds of plays, and reciting them with a peculiar vein of humour in that circle of friends in which his father moved.

At the close of the London theatre for the season 1768, his father took him to Ipswich, where he performed at the tender age of four, the character of the infant York, in Shakspeare's Richard the Third, a character which has introduced numerous children to the stage. This early exertion induced his father to place him at a school, where his mind might receive all the advantages attendant on a good education.

After passing the usual period of youth in pursuit of classical attainments, he evinced a desire to study painting, and gave many specimens of his pencil that warranted the encouragement of his genius in the fine arts. It was customary for Old Bannister to give his son a shilling for every new sketch he produced, and whenever the young artist wanted money, he retouched one of his old productions, knowing his father's discrimination in the pictorial art was not the most acute, and received his compliment for

very little trouble. Being one night in want of a small sum, he made a few alterations in an old head, and took it to his father, who was just going on the stage, and expatiated very largely on the various beauties of the picture, but without getting his expected gratuity : finding his observations had not the desired effect, he was under the necessity of asking the loan of a shilling, which occasioned his facetious father to reply in some warmth of temper—"Why, d——e, you are just like an ordinary, come when you will, its a shilling a head."—From the rapid advance he made in the art, a lady of fashion, to whom his efforts were shown, solicited Mr. Garrick to mention him to Loutherboung, who on the recommendation of that extraordinary actor, agreed to take him as a pupil, with a premium of two hundred pounds ; but his father not being able to accomplish the payment of the above sum, gave another turn to our hero's future prospects in life, and in less than six months he resigned the brush and pallet for the sword and shield.

The non-fulfillment of his father's agreement with Loutherboung, it is understood, did not in the least offend or disappoint the young artist, as the bent of his genius had for some time been strongly in favour of the stage, where he thought it was more agreeable to depict life, than portray it in the sedentary capacity of a painter. In the pursuit of the latter profession, he was strenuously encouraged by Mr. Garrick, who had a very high opinion of his talents, and offered him the most flattering inducements to become a performer. The proposal carried with it too many charms to be resisted, and he immediately undertook the character of Dick, in the farce of *The Apprentice*, in which character Mr. Gar-

rick observed he could display the variety of his powers to more advantage than in any other. Accordingly in the season of 1778, he made his appearance for the benefit of his father, on the boards of Old Drury.

The public having been informed for some time previous to his *entré*, that Garrick had indulged the most sanguine hopes of his pupil's success and future fame, this report not only convened a numerous audience, but induced the public to expect a display of juvenile talent not commonly attendant on the inexperience of stage adventurers.

Young Bannister performed Dick with all the whim and versatility of an established favourite; and taught us to expect at once the nature and the eccentricity by which his riper efforts have been characterized. The various talents which our hero exhibited both in private and public, endeared him so much to Mr. Garrick, that he became a principal object of his care and instruction in his retirement at Hampton, where Mr. Bannister has been heard to say, that he enjoyed the sweetest hours of his life. In the summer of the above year he offered himself a candidate for public favour on the Birmingham boards, in the following characters: Hamlet; Lothario, in the Fair Penitent; Edgar, in King Lear; Macduff, in Macbeth; Simon Pure, in A Bold Stroke for a Wife; Orlando, in As you Like It; Hyppolito, in the altered Tempest; and several others of less difficulty. The audience of that town having seen many London performers of considerable merit in the above-mentioned parts, were therefore perfectly qualified to judge of the merits of their new actor; and the applause which accompanied his representation of

some of the most arduous characters in the drama, warranted his return to the London stage, where there was a more expanded field for the display of his extensive and opposite powers.

In the following season, 1779, he appeared for the second time on the boards of Drury-lane, in the part of Zaphne, in Mahomet, and his delineation of this character gained him considerable reputation as a promising tragedian; he afterwards assumed Dorilas, in Merope, with great success. In consequence of the coalition which took place between the two theatres, Mr. Bannister performed Achmet, in Barbarossa, and the Prince of Wales, in King Henry the Fourth, at Covent-garden theatre, which drew from the public an ample share of eulogium.

In the summer of the year 1780 he made his first appearance at the Little Theatre, in the Hay-market, as representative of the whimsical Gradus, in Mrs. Cowley's pleasant after-piece of *Who's the Dupe?* His success in this character was a new proof of the great versatility of his powers. In the same year he joined the Drury-lane company, then under the management of Mr. King, and made his *debut* in Dabble, in *The Humourist*, in which character he was so successful, that he determined to relinquish for ever his acquaintance with Melpomene, to pay his more steady devotion to the comic lady.

In 1791 he married Miss Harper, at that time an actress of esteem at Covent-garden. To her musical education it is said, Mr. Bannister is indebted for the cultivation of his vocal talents, which were called into action in Mr. Cobb's comic opera of the *Strangers at Home*, in which Mr. Bannister, with extreme fear, and literally

in sober sadness, ventured on the drunken song. Nothing could be more flattering than the approbation manifested on the occasion, and our adventurous hero had ample reason to be proud of the issue of his experiment. At the close of the summer season of 1794, he took leave of Mr. Colman, in the most friendly manner, to embrace several very lucrative, but short engagements in different parts of England, Ireland, and Scotland; and has continued, with the exception of one summer, to occupy his vacation in the same pleasant and profitable way.

In 1802-3 he succeeded Mr. Kemble, as acting manager at Drury-lane, which laborious office he resigned in 1804. In the summer of the same year he appeared again at the Hay-market, with great success to himself and profit to the proprietors.

In the month of September last, Mr. Bannister met with a very serious accident, while on a shooting party, some few miles from London. He borrowed of Mr. Wroughton the gun of his friend the late Mr. King, the comedian, and after having shot out of it several times it burst, and tore his left hand almost to pieces; the top joint of one of his fingers was in consequence amputated, and his recovery has been very slow, though the cure performed is considered highly creditable to the skill and judgment of Mr. Lynn, his surgeon.

Mr. Bannister supports with prudent liberality an elegant establishment in Gower-street, where he enjoys the charms and happiness of an amiable companion and numerous offspring, whose education and virtuous pleasures occupy his leisure hours, and stamp the highest credit on his domestic character.

Our readers may expect that we who make an assertion, should offer some proof of the validity of our hypothesis ; but it must be recollected, that what we have advanced with respect to Mr. Bannister's progress on the stage, has only been a faithful account of the impression his talents have made on the public mind, at various places and at different periods ; and not a presumptuous opinion of our own on his qualifications as an actor. We therefore will now take the liberty to analyse his public merit, and then see how far fair investigation will warrant that panegyric which has been so long bestowed on him by every order of persons, and in almost every play in which he has offered his merits at a public tribunal for its censure or applause.

If an actor be able to assume youth, age, love, hatred, revenge, jealousy, and all the passions inherent in the human mind ; vary the voice, alter the features, and with the aid of dress persuade an audience that he is the very character drawn by the author, then the perfection of his art is attained ; but to communicate all those little delicate, but important touches of nature, which are the physical qualities of every man, is often too difficult for an actor to portray, though his hourly intercourse with society calls forth all those feelings which he is at a loss to depict so perfectly on the stage. The obvious reason is, that which is the most arduous to imitate, is the most natural ; and as Quintilian says of eloquence, " Nothing is harder, than what every one imagines he could have done himself." The same remark applies to a beautiful piece of composition, which the reader too often thinks he should find no difficulty in expressing in the same manner.

Now it is our duty to trace Mr. Bannister's

dramatic exertions, and see in what characters he has shewn the necessary and essential traits of a great imitator of human actions. It is not within our ability to analyse all the different characters he has performed, but we shall go over the merits of a few, in order to shew our opinion is founded on fact. The first part that presents itself for consideration, is *Lenitive*, in the farce of *The Prize*, and though the character is less confined to nature than many others, yet it requires first-rate talents to render it palatable to every description of auditors, as too much extravagance of treatment would burlesque the part, and disgust the audience. The manner in which Mr. Bannister gives the author, and those delicate touches his scenic efforts illustrate in the personification of the whimsical apothecary, may be ranked among his happiest exertions; and what shews it to be an unique piece of acting is, that many respectable performers have been afraid to attempt the part, and those whose courage have carried them beyond prudence, have either made it unpleasantly extravagant, or insipidly ridiculous. If we recollect right, *The Prize* has never been performed at the Hay-market theatre since Mr. Bannister has left that house, owing to the difficulty of getting any one to sustain his part.

Bowkitt, in the farce of *The Son-in-Law*, is another character in which he stands alone: the requisite beauties of a great actor are visible in every line of his delivery. The most critical eye might look in vain for defect, and if an auditor had the rigid features of Diogenes, Bannister's song and his fiddle scene, would relax them into a laugh. This is also a part that no one has ventured to assume since this gentleman quitted the Hay-market house.

The character of Sadi, in *The Mountaineers*, has never been performed by any other theatrical gentleman with that degree of original and rich humour which characterizes Bannister as its representative, and many respectable actors have found their own deficiency when they personated the Happy Tawny Moor.

His Philpot, in *The Citizen*, is a natural display of the passions and manner of a wild youth; the more we look at him in that part, the closer he approaches a being in real life, under the impression described by the author: the character is finely drawn by Mr. Murphy, and Bannister's delineation renders it conspicuously great.

Trudge, in *Inkle and Yarico*, is a part that accords happily with his genius: we recollect the representation of this opera just after the death of Edwin, and the audience seemed to feel a pleasure that there was one left, in whom they could find a large share of those talents which distinguished the deceased comedian.

His Gradus, in *Who's the Dupe?* is a wonderful contrast to the above, and shews his ability to change his manners and features into any cast of character required of him. The stiff, unpolished habits of a closeted pedant, are exhibited with a vein of dry humour, which is productive of the most irresistible laughter.

No part requires a greater versatility of power than Walter, in *The Children of the Wood*; those sudden transitions of the passions which distinguish this part, are given by Mr. Bannister with astonishing ability; the scene where he loses the children, evinces strong sensibility, and displays the possession of the finest feelings. The supper scene, where Josephine sings a song applicable to the distress that pervades his mind,

occasions acting of the most perfect kind; and when the children enter the room, they give cause to a sudden change of feelings, which forms one of the finest pictures of scenic action that the stage can boast of.

His personification of Ben, in *Love for Love*, shews a great versatility of talent: he delineates the rough sailor with true characteristic fire and exactness.

Robin, in *No Song no Supper*, is of the same description, and rendered highly interesting by his scenic powers.

In the comedy of the *Rivals*, he portrays the character of Acres with the most judicious discrimination: the duel scene is effective of the utmost mirth, by the oddity of his action and richness of his humour.

We now come to a part that requires a greater variety of talent for its support than almost any character in the English drama. Colonel Feignwell, in *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, contains a compound of almost every passion that is allied to our nature, and requires an opposite cast of features, manners, and action; yet Mr. Bannister assumes all the changes of person with the happiest effect, and those who are unacquainted with the comedy, would be led to believe that the various individuals he represented were not performed by the same person, but personified by different actors, from the accuracy that accompanies his change of countenance, the position of his limbs, with all those delicacies of description which colour the efforts of a great actor.

There are many other characters that must live in the recollection of our readers, which shew the versatility of his powers, and a refined judgment in the adaptation of his action to the

multifarious parts he represents in the course of a season. Mr. Bannister runs from one passion into another with consummate ease, and with all the advantages that are reported to have made Leigh conspicuous, as mentioned by Colley Cibber. Garrick is also said to have had the ability to change his nature into various forms, even in one part. This happy art of transition from passion to passion was obvious in his personification of Archer: he was one person with Cherry, another with Scrub, a third with Boniface, a fourth with Mrs. Sullen, and with Aimwell two distinct persons. It is no ill compliment to observe, that Mr. Bannister seems to have studied Garrick with great success, and imbibed many of the beauties which raised his immortal master above the generality of stage professors.

BARRY, SPRANGER—Was a native of Dublin, and born in the year 1719. He was the son of an eminent silversmith in that city, who bred this, his eldest, to the business; but an early intercourse with the theatre, with the assistance of a remarkably handsome person, fine voice, and pleasing address, soon obliterated all mechanical notions; and after keeping up the farce of attending the counter two or three years, he commenced actor on the Irish boards in the year 1741, in the character of Othello, when he gave evident marks that he wanted nothing but stage practice to make him reach the top of his profession.

In the summer of 1742 he played in Cork, and acquired fresh laurels. Here it was first suggested to him by his relation and particular friend, the late Sir Edward Barry, to come to England, as the spot most congenial to great

abilities. However, before he made this essay he returned to Dublin, and joined the company of that year, which stands remarkable in the Irish theatrical annals for the best stage that perhaps ever was known at any period, boasting at once of the great names of Garrick, Barry, Sheridan, Quin, Woffington, and Cibber: there was scarce a play that these performers did not change parts in a kind of contention for public applause. In 1747 he came to England, and was engaged at Drury-lane; and the next year the patent falling into Messrs. Garrick and Lacey's hands, he took the lead as principal performer at that house. Here he and Mr. Garrick frequently appeared in the same characters, and in a great measure divided the applause of the town. However, Barry feeling the effect of a competition, in which he had to combat the joint powers of actor and manager, quitted Drury-lane, and headed Covent-garden. Here his talents had full scope, and our stage Milo entered the lists against a man whom none hitherto durst approach. They played all their principal characters against each other with various success, which are marked by many epigrams and *bon mots* of that day. In this contention they remained till the summer of 1758, when Barry, joining with Mr. Woodward, of Drury-lane, undertook an expedition to Ireland, where they built two elegant play-houses, one in Dublin, the other in Cork; and, as joint managers, exerted their respective abilities with those of a very respectable company, part of which they brought over from England. However, after trying this scheme for some years, which, with the expence of building, the great salaries and increase of per-

formers, together with the uncertain returns of their theatres, they both found they had changed their situations for the worse. Woodward, making the best bargain he could with Barry to be paid his share in annuities, set sail for England, engaged himself at Covent-garden, and, in a very laughable prologue, restored himself to the public favour. Barry staid but a few seasons behind him, for both he and Mrs. Barry played, in the summer of 1766, at the Opera-house, in the Hay-market, under Mr. Foote. Mr. Barry soon after quitted Drury-lane for Covent-garden, when an hereditary gout (which occasionally attacked him from his earliest days) rendered his performances not only unfrequent, but imperfect; yet even in this unfinished state of his powers, cramped with aches, and bowed down with infirmity, he gave an affecting picture of what he once was. He died January 10, 1777.

In many of his characters he established an equality with Garrick, and in Othello, and a few others, contended for the superiority: in short, he was Mr. Garrick's most formidable rival. He had a gift of pleasing in conversation beyond most men, owing more to the manner than the matter. One of his greatest pleasures consisted in giving splendid entertainments, and no man did the honours of a table with more ease and politeness. Mr. Pelham, who was much delighted with his style of acting, once invited himself to sup with him; but the profusion of elegant dishes, with the choicest and dearest wines, which Barry provided for him, so displeased the statesman, that he never gave him another opportunity of exposing his want of judgment.

BARRYMORE, Mr.—Is a native of Taunton, and was early in life placed by his father in a counting-house, where he made but a short stay, having conceived a passion for the stage, and joined a company of players in the West of England, changing his real name of *Blewit* for the above. Having been seen and approved of by the late Mr. Colman at Brighton, he was accordingly engaged for the Hay-market, and intended for a vocal performer; but the engagement was afterwards broken on the manager's part. He applied, but in vain, to the managers of Drury-lane; at last, the loss of Mr. Dubellamy prompted them to give him an appearance, and he came out in Young Meadows, in *Love in a Village*; after which, he occasionally performed in tragedy, comedy, opera, &c. On the departure of Mr. Farren for the rival theatre, he appeared in characters of more consequence. One night, at a very short notice, he offered to read the character of Charles Oakley, in the comedy of *The Jealous Wife*, in consequence of the sudden indisposition of Mr. Bannister, jun. the intended representative. The apology having been made to the audience, and accepted, he began with the part in his hand; but during the second act, put it in his pocket, and went through the character to the great astonishment of all present, who testified their pleasure with flattering applause. He now married a lady in Bloomsbury, and the additional favour he acquired with the public, was justly attended with an increase of salary.

On the death of Mr. Brereton, and the departure of Mr. Palmer to the Royalty Theatre, he gained further opportunities of advancing himself; and on the death of Mr. Palmer,

by due attention and unremitting industry, ensured himself a permanent situation at Drury-lane theatre.

The figure of this gentleman is tall and well formed, and his features sufficiently strong and flexible to pourtray the violent passions of tragedy. He has a peculiar manner of pacing the stage, which is less liable to objection on the Drury-lane boards than it would be on a small stage; for the extension of step would, in appearance, throw the body out of its natural action, and render the effect of his deportment very unpleasant to the eye.

Mr. Barrymore's voice is powerful, and by no means inharmonious: he is also a correct speaker. Parts like *Glenalvon*, in *Douglas*, and *Stukely*, in the *Gamester*, he sustains with considerable ability; and in the sentimental characters of comedy, he gives a happy effect to the pathos of his author.

BARTLEY, Mr.—It is reported, that this performer was recommended to the managers of Drury-lane by Mrs. Jordan, who, during her engagement at Margate in 1802, entertained a favourable opinion of his abilities. He made his first appearance in London on the 18th of December in the above year, in the part of Orlando, in *As You Like It*. The figure of Mr. Bartley is not very favourable to many of the characters he occasionally personifies; yet his correct mode of delivery compensates for his personal defects. It is said that he has a very quick study, and is often found very useful when any one of higher rank in the profession is unable to perform from sudden indisposition.

BEARD, JOHN—This celebrated performer was bred in the King's Chapel, and was one of the singers in the Duke of Chandos' chapel at Cannons, where he performed in an oratorio composed by Handel. His first appearance on the stage was at Drury-lane, August 30, 1737, in the character of Sir John Loverule, in *The Devil to Pay*. In 1738-9 he married the only daughter of James Earl of Waldegrave, widow of Lord Edward Herbert; and on her death, which happened fourteen years afterwards, erected to her memory a handsome pyramidal monument, expressive of his love and sorrow. He afterwards married the daughter of Mr. Rich, who was a patentee of Covent-garden, and by whose death he was left in affluent circumstances.

In 1744 Mr. Beard went to Covent-garden, where he remained four seasons. He then engaged with Mr. Garrick, and continued with him till 1752, when, on his second marriage, he was engaged at Covent-garden, and on the death of his father-in-law, became one of the proprietors. His first appearance at that time was in *Macheath*, October 10, 1756; *Polly* by Miss Brent; and the opera ran fifty-two nights.

During his management, in February 1763, the following serious riot took place: the opera of *Artaxerxes* being advertised to be performed at the Theatre in Covent-garden, the first time for that season, with notice that nothing under the full price could be taken; the audience, in consequence thereof, would not suffer it to begin until Mr. Beard came upon the stage, and gave them a categorical answer, Yes, or No, concerning half-prices. From six in the evening until past nine, several messages and speeches passed, but none that the audience thought satis-

factory. One gentleman in the pit declared, that the actors ought to submit in this to the town, more especially as they had lately a precedent in Mr. Garrick. For want of this point being determined, at about half an hour past nine the audience grew so exasperated, that the benches of the second gallery, the seats in the boxes, the glasses, and any thing else that they could come at, were pulled to pieces. The stage was crowded with the audience that left the boxes and pit. The damages amounted to some hundred pounds, and some of the people belonging to the house were very much hurt.

In 1767 he was engaged in a literary contest with Dr. Shebbeare, for having rejected a comedy of his. In 1768 he retired from the stage, on account of the loss of his hearing; and died February 5, 1791, aged 75, at Hampton, Middlesex, where he resided after his retirement. He left legacies to the amount of 3000*l*. He gave 100*l*. to the Fund for Decayed Performers; and to Mr. Hull, his intimate friend and acquaintance, 50*l*. to buy a ring in memory of him. His remains were deposited in the vault of the church at Hampton.

BELLAMY, GEORGE ANNE—The mother of this lady was the daughter of an eminent farmer and hop-planter at Maidstone, whose name was Seal. He was one of the people called Quakers, and grew so opulent, as to be enabled to purchase an estate at Tunbridge Wells, called Mount Zion. Dying young and intestate, his whole fortune fell into the hands of his widow, who married a second husband, named Busby; a man of *supposed* property, but, in fact, so involved in debt, that Mrs. Busby, not having

taken the necessary precautions to secure a maintenance for herself and daughter, was left destitute of support.

Before this sad reverse of fortune, she furnished her houses on Mount Sion, and lett them, during the season, to persons of the first distinction. One of those who occasionally occupied these houses was Mrs Godfrey, sister to the great Duke of Marlborough, who contracted such a friendship for Mrs. Busby and her daughter, that she offered to bring up the latter in every respect like her own. This offer, though declined at first in the prosperous circumstances of Mrs. Busby, was now gratefully accepted.

Mrs. Godfrey accordingly placed Miss Seal, with her own daughter, at a boarding-school in Queen-square. Here she remained till the age of fourteen, when she unfortunately attracted the notice of Lord Tyrawley, who accidentally met with her while on a visit. Young, inexperienced, and volatile, his Lordship soon persuaded her to elope from school, and to give up every hope from the protection of her kind patroness. Lord Tyrawley carried his fair prize to his own apartments in Somerset-house, where she was treated with the same respect as if she had been really Lady Tyrawley; a name which he had frequently promised, before her elopement, to confer upon her, and he still continued to assure her that he would fulfil his engagement. She assumed his name, and lived with him for several months, till his Lordship was ordered to join his regiment in Ireland, where, upon his arrival, he found his estates so involved by the mismanagement of his steward, that nothing could retrieve his affairs but an advantageous marriage.

With this view he paid his addresses to Lady Mary Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Blessington, whose fortune was reported to be 30,000*l.* and who, though not handsome, had a genteel person and engaging disposition.

During the courtship, the Earl of Blessington having heard much of the connexion between his intended son-in-law and Miss Seal (then called Lady Tyrawley), wrote to the latter, to desire information concerning the nature of that connexion, at the same time explaining the motives of his request. This letter was received by Miss Seal just after her recovery from her first lying-in of a son. In the violence of her resentment she enclosed Lord Blessington every letter she had received from her lover. Among these was one she had just received by the same post, and which she sent unopened. In this letter Lord Tyrawley, after explaining the necessity of his marriage, added, that "he should stay no longer with his intended wife than was necessary to receive her fortune, when he would immediately fly on the wings of love to share it with her; that he had made choice of Lady Mary Stewart, who was both ugly and foolish, in preference to one with an equal fortune who was beautiful and sensible, lest an union with a more agreeable person might be the means of decreasing his affection for her, &c. &c."

Lord Blessington, highly irritated on the perusal of this letter, instantly forbade his daughter ever to see or write again to her perfidious lover. But his injunction came too late; they had been already privately married. Lord Tyrawley, however, was disappointed of his expected fortune: his mistress renounced her connexion with him; a separation from his wife ensued; and his Lord-

ship, the disappointed victim of his duplicity, was sent, at his own solicitation, in a public character to Lisbon. On her separation from Lord Tyrawley, Miss Seal embraced the theatrical profession; and going to Ireland, performed the first characters there for several years with some reputation. But a disagreement arising between the proprietors of the theatre and her, she on a sudden took the strange resolution of embarking for Portugal, in order to renew her intimacy with Lord Tyrawley. His Lordship, who had previously sent her many pressing, but hitherto ineffectual, invitations, had lately forborne them.

He now received her with open arms; but having recently formed a connexion with a Portuguese lady, a circumstance of which he did not care to inform Miss Seal, he placed the latter in the house of an English merchant. In this family she became acquainted with Captain Bellamy, who having in vain solicited her to accept his hand, and suspecting that her refusal was occasioned by a secret partiality for Lord Tyrawley, who likewise visited at the same house, informed her of his Lordship's connexion with Donna Anna. Rage now supplied the place of affection; she immediately married the Captain, and set sail with him for Ireland. After the arrival of Captain Bellamy, and his new married lady, at the place of their destination, our heroine was born, on St. George's day, 1733, some months too soon for the Captain to claim any degree of consanguinity to her. Her mother had so carefully concealed her pregnancy and connexion with Lord Tyrawley from her husband, that he had not entertained the least suspicion of her incontinence. Her birth, however,

discovered the whole, and so exasperated the Captain at her duplicity, that he immediately left the kingdom, and never after either saw or corresponded with her.

Lord Tyrawley, though greatly displeased at Miss Seal's sudden departure from Lisbon, wrote to his agent in Ireland, to request that if she proved pregnant in time, to consider the child as his, and to take care of it as soon as born, without, if possible, suffering the mother to see it; for his Lordship did not conceive her connexion with Captain Bellamy to be of an honourable nature. Accordingly, our apologist was put out to nurse till she was two years old; and at the age of four was placed, for her education, at a convent at Boulogne, where she continued till she was eleven. On being ordered home, a Mr. Du Vall, who had been a domestic of his Lordship's, but now lived in St. James's-street, was directed to meet her at Dover; and with him she resided till his Lordship's return from Portugal, when he received her in the most parental manner, and soon took her to a little box he had hired in Bushy-park.

Here she was introduced to all his visitors, who were chiefly the gay; and who, the more effectually to please Lord Tyrawley, were lavish in the praise of his daughter, and very early tainted her mind with the pernicious influence of flattery.

His Lordship being soon after appointed Ambassador to Russia, she was left under the care of a lady of quality, with an annual allowance of 100*l*. and under an express injunction not to see her mother. The latter, however, who had married again, and whose husband, after stripping her of every thing valuable, had deserted

her, prevailed upon her daughter to quit her kind protectress, and live with her. In consequence of this, the ample allowance, which had been her mother's inducement to this imprudent step, was withdrawn, and Miss Bellamy was renounced by her father.

Soon after, Mr. Rich, of Covent-garden theatre, having by accident heard her repeat some passages in Othello, engaged her as a performer. She had perfected herself in the characters of Monimia and Athenais, and the former was fixed on for her first appearance. Mr. Quin, who governed the theatre with a rod of iron, while Mr. Rich, though proprietor, was, through his indolence, a mere cypher, when she was introduced to him, insisted on the impropriety of a child attempting a character of such importance, and recommended to her to play Serina instead of Monimia. Rich, however, persevered in bringing her forward in her chosen character. A rehearsal was called, when the fair adventurer was treated by the company with sovereign contempt. Mr. Quin, who was to play Chamont, was absent; Mr. Hull *mumbled* over Castalio; and Mr. Ryan *whistled* Polydore; but as she had the opportunity of seeing the piece performed at Drury-lane theatre the night before her appearance, it gave her a sufficient knowledge of the *business* of the play. Her performance met with universal approbation, and the congratulations of Quin, &c. while Rich expressed as much triumph as he usually did on the success of his darling pantomimes.

Having thus happily commenced her theatrical career, she had the good fortune to acquire the patronage of the first ladies of distinction, and at the same time had, among the gentlemen,

many professed admirers, among whom was Lord Byron ; but as she would listen to nothing but marriage and a coach, his Lordship, chagrined at her rejecting his own terms, contrived a plan to be revenged : in consequence of which, the Earl of —, a friend of his Lordship's, called one Sunday evening to inform her, that Miss B—, an intimate of her's, was in a coach at the bottom of Southampton-street, and wished to speak to her ; when, on going to the coach door, without hat or gloves, she was suddenly lifted into it by his Lordship, and carried off as fast as the horses could gallop. When a little recovered from her astonishment, which at first had deprived her of utterance, she gave free vent to her reproaches. The coach soon stopt in a lonely place at the top of North Audley-street, fronting the fields ; Oxford-street, at that time, not extending so far as it does at present. Here the Earl got out, and took her into his house. He then left her, as he said, to prepare a lodging for her, which he had already seen at a mantua-maker's in Broad-street, Carnaby-market. He soon returned ; and with him came the person she least expected to see—her own brother. She instantly flew into his arms ; but was repulsed so violently, that she fell to the ground. The shock of such a repulse from a brother, in the moment in which she hoped to find him her protector, deprived her of her senses.

On her return to sensibility, the only object that appeared was an old female servant, who told her, that she had orders to convey her to the lodgings that had been prepared for her. From this old woman she learned, that her brother had bestowed manual chastisement upon the Earl ; but that, as he seemed to suppose

she had consented to the elopement, he had declared he would never see her more. The woman added, that he had threatened the Earl and his associate with a prosecution, which had so terrified her master, that he gave orders to have her removed out of the house as soon as possible, as her being found there might make against him.

This elopement having been misrepresented in the newspapers, she wrote her mother a true account, in hopes to regain her favour; but Mrs. Bellamy, at the instigation of a wicked female relation who lived with her, returned her daughter's letter unopened. Thus abandoned by her mother, and too much depressed by public scandal to attempt a re-instatement in the theatrical line, the anguish of her mind brought on a fever, that had nearly proved fatal, but of which, her youth and constitution at length got the better. On her recovery, she paid a visit to a female relation of her mother, named Clarke, at Braintree, Essex, whose family, being Quakers, it was probable, had not heard of her disgrace; and here she met with a very cordial reception. The remains of recent illness would have appeared a sufficient motive for the visit, had it not been supposed likewise, that she came to claim a legacy of 300*l.* that had been left to her by a sister of Mrs. Clarke, on condition that she never went upon the stage, and which they paid her immediately, without inquiring whether she had forfeited it.

The famous Zachary Moore, who from possessing an estate of 25,000*l.* a-year, was reduced by his extravagance, at the age of forty, to the necessity of accepting an ensigncy in a regiment at Gibraltar, happened to be on a visit

in that neighbourhood, and unfortunately discovered that this picture of sainted simplicity, was no less a person than Miss Bellamy, the celebrated actress. This discovery put a period to her sojourning with her Quaker relations. From Clarke-hall she repaired to Ingatestone, in order to visit Miss White, another Quaker relation, whose family happening then to be at the yearly meeting at London, she procured admittance into the house of a Roman Catholic farmer, near the town, with whom she boarded for some time. Her account of her residence here, and of the unexpected sight of her mother, has the pleasing air of romance, with the interesting charms of truth. All the letters which she had sent to her mother had been unanswered; for they had all been intercepted by the wicked relation before-mentioned, whose death produced this discovery, and terminated in a reconciliation between Mrs. Bellamy and her daughter.

On her return to town, 1745, she was engaged by Mr. Sheridan, to accompany him as a theatrical recruit to Ireland. On her arrival there, she was acknowledged by Mrs. O'Hara, Lord Tyrawley's sister, as her niece; and she was introduced, of course, to the first circles in Dublin. Here she continued for two seasons, and became acquainted with a Mr. Crump, on whose account, in the sequel she suffered much persecution.

On her return to England, she was again engaged at Covent-garden theatre, and by the kind interposition of Mr. Quin, reconciled to Lord Tyrawley. This ended in another elopement from this theatre; for his Lordship being extremely urgent with her to marry Mr. Crump, she suffered herself one evening to be carried off from the Theatre by Mr. Metham, while the

audience were waiting for her appearance in the character of Lady Fanciful, in the fifth act of the Provoked Wife. In this part of her narrative, she relates a laughable incident that happened at a rehearsal of Coriolanus, which play was getting up for the benefit of Thomson's sisters. Mr. Quin's pronunciation was of the old school: in this Mr. Garrick had made an alteration. The one sounded the *a* open; the other sounded it like an *e*; which occasioned the following ludicrous mistake. In the piece, when the Roman ladies come in procession, to solicit Coriolanus to return to Rome, attended by the Tribunes, and the Centurions of the Volscian army, bearing *fascēs*, their ensigns of authority, they are ordered by the hero, who was Mr. Quin, to lower them, as a token of respect; but the men who personated the centurions, imagining, through Mr. Quin's mode of pronunciation, that he said their *faces*, instead of their *fascēs*, all bowed their heads together.

Mr. Metham hired an elegant house for her at York, where, in a few months, she was delivered of a son. In the ensuing season she was again engaged at Covent-garden theatre, and soon after effected another reconciliation with Lord Tyrawley. By a deception of Mr. Lacy, she was engaged the season after at Drury-lane, and in a subsequent one again at Covent-garden.

Her connexion with Mr. Metham did not prove permanent, through jealousy on his part, and resentment on her's. She vowed never to live with him again, either as a mistress or wife; and though he would fain have purchased a reconciliation by making her the latter, she continued inflexible in her resolution. She determined, moreover, never to form a connexion

with any other man; but through circumstances of persuasion and deception, was induced to listen to the proposals of Mr. Calcraft; though she declared him a man it was not in her power to love. With this gentleman she lived about nine years and a half; but a connexion, in which, according to her own account, her extravagance was boundless, and his meanness insupportable, could not be permanent.

She next married, as she thought, Mr. Digges, the player, in Ireland. Her debts, at this time, amounted to 10,300*l.* about 6000*l.* of which, she said, was expended in Mr. Calcraft's house-keeping. Here it will be sufficient to observe, without following our heroine through her excursions to the continent, and her subsequent engagements at the theatres in London and Dublin, that as Mr. Calcraft refused to perform his promise of discharging her debts, they continued ever after to involve her in inextricable difficulties, and frequent arrests; till, at last, she was obliged to take lodgings, under the name of West, at Walcot-place, Lambeth, and was even tempted to put a period to her existence.

A kind of fatality, indeed, seemed ever to pursue this lady; for among other untoward circumstances of her life, it must not be forgotten, that a fortune of several thousand pounds was left to her by a Mr. Sykes, who died in France; but of which she was deprived by the villany of his servant, who absconded with his will and effects. Having incurred the displeasure of Mr. Colman, by refusing (with some other performers) to sign an approbation of his conduct as acting manager of Covent-garden Theatre, during his dispute with Messrs. Harris and Rutherford, she was finally discharged from

that theatre: and Mr. Woodward, the actor, having boarded some time with her, at Strand on the Green, after the dissolution of her connexion with Mr Digges (who, like Mr. Calcraft, it seems, was discovered to have a wife) he left her, in 1777, all his plate, jewels, and a reversion, on the death of his brother, of 700*l.* the whole of which, except 59*l.* she lost through the chicanery of the law. She took her leave of the stage in 1784; the managers of Drury-lane having generously granted her a benefit, at the request of her friends: the play was *Braganza*, and Mrs. Yates appeared on the occasion, in the character of the Duchess. She died February 16th, 1788.

BELLAMY, Mr.—Was educated at St. Paul's School, and belonged to the choir of the above church. Early in life he became a professor of the histrionic art, and has performed in several country companies in different parts of the kingdom. A few years ago he had a share in the Manchester theatre, which he disposed of, from some unpleasant circumstances having rendered him unpopular with the inhabitants. On his marriage with Miss Grist, formerly of Covent-garden, he went to Ireland, where he purchased a share in the theatre at Belfast, which is said to be at present very profitable to him.

Mr. Bellamy made his first appearance this season at Covent-garden theatre, in the character of Robin Hood, in the favourite opera of that name. Of his first essay on the London boards, in justice to his professional exertions, we must speak favourably: he delivered the dialogue of his part with much feeling and effect, and sang

his songs with considerable taste. He has a powerful base voice, which appears to be under the management of a fine ear, and a good musical education.

Since his assumption of the above part, he has personified Hawthorn, in *Love in a Village*, and imparted to the character all the spirit of which it appeared capable, without violating the decorum of the natural rustic.

The figure of this performer is good; his features are regular and expressive, and he will, no doubt, be found an acquisition to the theatre. Previous to his appearing on the London stage as a regular performer, he sang in various Oratorios, and distinguished himself as a singer of no ordinary powers.

BENSLEY, Mr.—In the early part of this gentleman's life he was an officer in the Marines; at which time he performed in private plays, that were got up by the officers of his regiment, for their own amusement. He served in North-America, and on the conclusion of the war, returned to England; and having been strongly recommended to Mr. Garrick, procured an engagement. His first appearance at Drury-lane was in *Pierre*, in *Venice Preserved*, 1765, when he was supported by a large body of his brother officers. He then engaged at Covent-garden, where, on the death of Messrs. Powell and Holland, he became a more conspicuous performer. Afterwards he returned to Drury-lane, and retired in 1796, and is now barrack-master of Knightsbridge barracks.

BETTY, Master WILLIAM HENRY WEST—This extraordinary youth burst all at once upon the

world, and has been allowed, by men of profound judgment, to possess many of the chief requisites for forming a perfect actor. The applause which he has received in the principal theatres of England, Scotland, and Ireland, may be considered by some, as a tribute to novelty; but it will hardly be suspected that such men as a Smith, a Home, a Macconochie*, and a Fox, would be so grossly deficient in point of judgment, as to lavish their praise on an object utterly unworthy of applause. Indeed, it must be confessed, that this young gentleman has no occasion to complain of the want of patronage. At an early period of his reputation, he was noticed by one of the Princes of the Blood. He has since been presented to the King, and the Heir Apparent to the Throne; and passed some time at the villas of our nobles and statesmen. Nor has the press been slow in celebrating his fame; he has been praised both in poetry and prose. Prints of him have been circulated throughout the kingdom. Two of his portraits† have been exhibited at Somerset-house; and an engraving, by an eminent artist, is now preparing. Even our Universities have condescended to notice him, as he has lately become the subject of a prize-medal at Cambridge‡.

In respect to the characters in which he has appeared, some of them do not as yet present a sufficient degree of *verisimilitude*. It is impossible, indeed, for a mere boy to preserve the illusion

* Lord Meadowbank.

† One by Opie, and another by Northcote.

‡ We understand that the following is the subject of the epigram for Sir William Brown's prize-medal:

“Quid noster Roscius egit?”

for any length of time in Rolla, Osmond, and Richard the Third; but in Hamlet, Norval, Achmet, and Romeo, the probabilities of human life are not so grossly outraged.

When he first appeared on the London boards, his person was rather tall, considering his age, but within these two seasons he has considerably increased in altitude and bulk. His features when off the stage, are not very expressive, yet his limbs are finely turned, and happily formed. He possesses a piercing eye, but his nose is not prominent, while his face is rather flat. His hair, on the other hand, is not only luxuriant, but of a most beautiful hue, somewhat between a flaxen colour and a brown. He is not unconscious of this, and takes care to display his ringlets on critical occasions with effect. He dances well, and fences with grace and dexterity; for the latter accomplishments he is indebted partly to his father, and partly to Mr. Angelo.

In respect to his memory, he, perhaps, excels all his contemporaries, and even most of his predecessors: it is in no common degree retentive, and scarcely requires in the course of a whole night the aid of a prompter in one single instance. He is by birth a Salopian, having been born in St. Chad's parish, Shrewsbury, on the 13th of September, 1791, as appears from a copy of his register; and we have from the same authority, that he was christened on the 18th of September of that year.

He is descended from reputable families on both sides: for his father, William Henry, after whom he was named*, is the son of the late Dr.

* The addendum of West was in compliment to a family of that name at Worcester.

Betty, a physician of some eminence at Lisburn, in Ireland; while his mother, Miss Mary Stanton, is the daughter of Mr. Stanton, a person of considerable property in the county of Worcester. With this lady, who was well educated, he received some fortune, which is settled, we understand, upon the children. It has been strenuously denied that she ever performed on a public stage, or was in the habit of appearing on the boards of private theatres, a suggestion by means of which it has been attempted to account for the early proficiency of the son. Having changed his residence from Hopton Wafers, in the county of Salop, soon after the birth of this boy, Mr. Betty repaired to his native country, and settling in the north of Ireland, occupied a farm near Ballynahinch, in the county of Down. Being in the centre of that district, which is so celebrated on account of the linen manufactory, he is said to have attempted an increase to his income by engaging in that line of business. In the mean time the son grew up, and conducted himself as children of his years usually do, without affording any extraordinary symptoms of early genius, or discovering the least presage of future celebrity.

Much has been said and written of late years relative to original *talents*, and it now seems to be acknowledged, that extraordinary men are gifted with a general excellence, which by a fortunate direction towards any one science or profession, enables them to attain eminence in it. It is possible, indeed, that the mind might be fully equal to a situation for which the body is not at all fitted: but an exquisite *adaptation* of both to the same object, cannot fail of producing eminence, and ensuring celebrity. This was exactly

the case in the present instance; and Master Betty in his eleventh year, a period when other children have not as yet thought of, far less fixed on, their future career, finally decided on his situation in life.

At this period, the reputation of our great female tragedian, which had hitherto been confined to Great Britain, was extended to another portion of the empire, and the people of Ireland were captivated in their turn. Previously to the summer of 1802, the subject of this memoir had never yet seen a play. Nature had already fitted him in some measure for his future destiny, by enabling him, young as he then was, to comprehend the excellence of others. His memory was in no common degree retentive, and he had imbibed from the lessons and example of a fond mother, a decided taste for recitation. Thus the foundation of the future actor may be said to have been already laid; and when, in addition to this, it is mentioned that he already exhibited an ardour, which in due time assumed the appearance, and produced all the effects of ambition, we shall be the less surprized at what now occurred.

Mrs. Siddons, during her excursion to Ireland, having agreed to perform a few nights at Belfast, the Bettys repaired to that theatre, and were present at the representation of Pizarro. It was not, however, with Rolla, but with Elvira, that the boy was captivated. He repeated her speeches, imitated her manner, copied her accents, and studied her attitudes. Nor was he inattentive to the applause which she had obtained: and he might have truly said with one of the heroes of antiquity, that these triumphs "would not allow him to sleep."

From this moment the drama became his sole study, as to recite favourite speeches was the chief business of his tender years. The applause obtained by his efforts, already gave him a taste of the future reputation he was to earn; and this at length becoming the master-passion of his soul, he frankly informed his father, "that he should die if he were not permitted to become a player." There is surely nothing very encouraging, even at the present period, in this profession. Every moon-struck apprentice fancies he possesses talents for the stage; and he who finds himself incapable of making a shoe, or a table, or a coat, still thinks he is fitted by Nature to draw forth the rapturous and involuntary praises of an admiring audience. This passion has been finely ridiculed by the late Mr. Murphy, in a popular farce*.

Such is, indeed, the odium attached to the condition of an itinerant player, and so despicable their profits, which are generally coupled with the degrading idea of "six-pences and candle ends," that parents revolt at the bare mention of it. The darling passion, however, of a darling son, was in this instance gratified; for young Betty, after due consideration, was introduced to Mr. Atkins, the manager of the theatre at Belfast; and in his presence rehearsed some favourite passages from the part of Elvira. The gloomy and disastrous state of Ireland at this period, being peculiarly unfavourable to ex-

* The Apprentice. The prologue, which abounds with point, concludes, we believe, with the following lines:

"Not ev'n attorneys have this rage withstood:

"But chang'd their pens for truncheons, ink for blood,

"And, sad reverse, die for their country's good."

hibitions of every kind, nothing was as yet effected, and martial law soon after precluded the efforts of the sock and buskin. But however disadvantageous it might prove to the nation at large, this state of affairs afforded a fine opportunity to the future tragedian, for strengthening his powers, and adding to his stock of knowledge. Mr. Hough, the prompter, a man of penetration, and capable of instructing others, now found leisure to pay a visit to the family; and although Nature appears to have already in some degree fitted the pupil for the stage, yet it is allowed by all, that he is not a little indebted for his present fame and success to the indefatigable exertions of this master, under whose friendly tuition he studied the parts of Rolla, Douglas, and Osman*. Nor was this all; for he represented his attainments in so favourable a point of view to Mr. Atkins, that he was engaged by him for four nights, and thus actually performed amidst bursts of applause, on those very boards on which he had at first beheld the English heroine with wonder and delight.

It was on the first of August, 1803, when yet a child of eleven† years and eleven months

* Some disputes unfortunately occurred between the dramatic tutor and the family of his pupil, in the course of which one of the parties is said to have exclaimed,

“ Blow, blow, thou winter’s wind!

“ Thou art not so unkind

“ As man’s ingratitude!”

We are happy in having learned, however, that this affair has been amicably adjusted, and that the sum of fifty guineas a year has been settled on Mr. Hough for life.

† It appears, that when the performance was announced, the *years* were mentioned, but the odd months omitted, as the advertisement stated, “ a young gentleman of *eleven years of age*.”

old, that he appeared for the first time in the character of Osman, in the tragedy of Zara. His reception was flattering, and, for an initiatory performance, in which a boy was to personate a man, it was allowed that he had achieved wonders. In Young Norval, a character more suitable to his years, he appeared to greater advantage; and in Rolla and Romeo, which he played in succession, considering the difficulty of sustaining such first-rate characters, he was allowed to have satisfied credulity, and silenced scepticism. Such a phenomenon in the theatrical world soon raised the curiosity of the metropolis of Ireland, and after trying his strength in a provincial theatre, he was accordingly invited to the capital, where he performed every night to overflowing houses, and acquired the appellation of the "Infant Roscius*."

From Cork, where he received one-fourth of the receipts of the house, and a clear benefit, and was not a little followed and caressed, he repaired to Glasgow, in 1804, and played his series of characters, commencing with the most appropriate of all, that of Young Norval, during a period of fourteen nights. In

* It has been since remarked that the name of *Æsopus* would have been more suitable:

"Roscius citator, *Æsopus* gravior fuit, quod
"Ille comedias, hic tragedias ægit."

Under Roscius, Cicero studied his attitudes; and also his pronunciation. As to Clodius *Æsopus*, he died worth upwards of one hundred and sixty thousand pounds; a sum which young Betty, provided his improvement be progressive, may some day realize. We trust, however, that he will never be so luxurious as his Roman precursor, who appears to have had pies made of singing birds at his table, each of which cost forty or fifty guineas.

Scotland, indeed, he was received with enthusiasm, particularly in the capital*. There the play of Douglas was acted amidst the plaudits of an audience at once flattered and pleased; while the venerable author, after a lapse of nearly half a century, pronounced the young tragedian to be "the genuine offspring and the son of Douglas;" and prophesied "that he would soon be one of the first actors that had ever appeared upon the British stage." At length he repaired to the country which had given him birth, and appeared in one of our great manufacturing towns for fourteen nights, in the characters of Norval, Hamlet, Rolla, Richard, Frederick, and Octavian; on the last of which the receipts amounted to one hundred and sixty-six pounds.

In the mean time the London managers were not inattentive to their interests; and after a visit of friendship to Worcester, and professional

*The lawyers of the Scottish metropolis have always been considered as its critics, in respect to theatrical affairs. From these young Betty received the most flattering reception; and by one of them (Lord Meadowbank), he was presented with Beattie's Minstrel, accompanied by a very elegant letter, in which he expresses his wish that he should read that work; "as," says he, "it exhibits a most interesting picture of the inspirations of youthful genius, and of the anticipations of future excellence, while it delineates in delightful and true colours, that immense field of study which years must cultivate and master, before you can be entitled to the highest honours of your profession. Give me leave to add," continues his Lordship, "that the strictest guard over your own conduct, and the most inviolable seclusion from the brutifying society of coarse or immoral characters is essential, either to obtain or preserve the bodily vigour, the penetrating discernment, and the purity of taste, on the happiest combination of which your future eminence must depend.

exertions at Sheffield, Liverpool, Chester, &c. he was engaged at Covent-garden for twelve nights, at fifty guineas a-night, and a clear benefit; while he agreed to perform at Drury-lane during the *intervening nights*: a circumstance more gratifying to the town than advantageous to the child.

It was early in December, 1804, that Master Betty, after a previous performance of Achmet, in the tragedy of Barbarossa, first appeared before a London audience in his favourite character of Douglas; Mrs. Litchfield acted Lady Randolph. On his first entrance, the extreme youth of the candidate for public fame seemed to bespeak but little promise of excellence; and when questioned by Lord Randolph, the manner of his reply did not fully realize all that had been expected.

"A low-born man, of parentage obscure,
Who nought can boast, but his desire to be
A soldier, and to gain a name in arms."

He however, manifestly improved as he proceeded, and discovered his supposed lineage, with considerable effect:

"My name is Norval: on the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flock," &c.

But it was in the description of his friend and instructor, that he rivetted the attention of the audience, and realized their expectations:

"Small is the skill my lord delights to praise
In him he favours, &c. &c."

After this he described the hermit's quarrel,

"A rude and boist'rous captain of the sea."

And then disclosed the catastrophe with peculiar effect:

—— “ Fierce they fought ;
The stranger fell, and with his dying breath
Declared his name and lineage. Mighty pow’r!
The soldier cried, My brother! oh my brother!”

In his interview with his mother too, the interesting passages were distinctly marked, and the pathos well preserved. Something was doubtless still wanting—something that was impossible to be acquired; for the smallness of the figure, the unformed voice, and the extreme youth of the actor, were not calculated to *realize* the scene, and justify the exclamation—

“ The blood of Douglas will protect itself.”

And again :

“ Some in your cause will arm ; I ask but few
To drive these spoilers from my father’s house.”

He now increased his list of characters to fourteen or fifteen, and by appearing, in turns, as Romeo, Frederick, Octavian, Hamlet, Tancred, Osman. Achmet*, and Richard, has proved,

* Mr. Smith, formerly of Drury-lane, came to town on purpose to witness the performance of Master Betty, and after seeing him in the characters of Achmet and Douglas, presented him with a cornelian seal set in gold, on which was engraved a beautiful and correct impression of the head of Garrick.

The subjoined addresses, in poetry and prose, accompanied this very flattering token of approbation from a veteran actor, and one of the few remaining disciples of the old school.

To Master Betty.

“ Roscius, the boast of Rome’s dramatic story,
Left undisputed trophies of his glory ;
Not more illustrious by his scenic art,
Than by the social virtues of his heart

that his powers are general, and his talents various. If much on one hand remains to be accomplished, much also, on the other, appears to have been achieved; and it is allowed by all, that so early a display of excellence was never before witnessed in a British Theatre.

Premature knowledge in some other arts has indeed been frequently obtained. In draw-

“ Our British Roscius, great and good,
When on the summit of applause he stood,
Melpomene and gay *Thalia* join’d
To grace his talents with a taste refin’d;
Whilst these immortaliz’d his splendid name,
His virtues consecrated all his fame.

“ May’st thou, young genius of the present hour,
Whose bud anticipates so rare a flower,
Spreading thy blossoms to a ripen’d age,
Prove a third Roscius to th’ admiring stage;
And like those stars of Britain and of Rome,
Bear thy unfaded laurels to the tomb.”

The following letter, while it reflects credit on Master Betty, confers great honour on the writer :

“ Young Gentleman;

“ The fame of your talents has drawn an old fellow-labourer in the Theatric Vineyard, from his retirement, at a considerable distance, in a very advanced age, and he feels himself well rewarded for his trouble.

“ May your success continue, and may you live to be an honour to the stage, and to your country.

“ Let me recommend to you strict attention to the moral duties, and to the cultivation of your mind, by the arts and *belles lettres*; without which, little improvement can be gained in your profession, much less in society.

“ Accept, from me, a strong likeness of your great predecessor, Garrick. When you are acquainted with his character, keep his virtues in your mind, and imitate his professional talents as far as possible.

“ Couldst thou, in this engraved pebble trace
The living likeness of his plastic face;
Whilst thy congenial spirit caught its fire,
His magic eye would thy whole soul inspire.”

“ I am, yours, &c.

“ W. SMITH.”

ing, which may be considered as a refinement of the sense of sight, aided by the pliability of the fingers, some infant pupils have exhibited great taste; but it is in music that real wonders have been achieved. Samuel Wesley was a composer before he could write, according to the testimony of Dr. Burney. Frederica Wynne, when six years old, executed the lessons of Scarlatti with precision. Mozart, at the age of four, was not only capable of executing lessons on the harpsichord, but actually composed some in an easy style and taste*. But William Crouch, born at Norwich, July 5, 1775, is, perhaps, the most celebrated instance of early proficiency: he having of his own accord, and without any previous instructions played a popular tune† on an organ constructed by his father, when only two years and three weeks old: and a voluntary in about a month after. But it is surely far more difficult to create an actor than a musician. In the latter case, it is only necessary to possess one sense in an exquisite degree, and this is not unfrequently obtained at the expence sometimes, perhaps, of the understanding. But to make a great actor, the union of a variety of qualifications becomes absolutely necessary; voice, manner, memory, judgment, person, and mental acquirements. To these are to be added several other requisites, such as dancing and fencing; and to complete the whole, music itself should assuredly be included.

By means of the necessary accomplishments, added to a free and easy air, young Betty is enabled not only to tread the stage with elegance,

* Philosophical Transactions, vol. lx. for 1770.

† God save the King.

but, occasionally to engage in combat with a degree of science that astonishes even an expert swordsman.

None of our veteran actors exhibit a greater degree of self possession: this is requisite in every performer, and in a hero indispensable. He himself also is carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, and appears to feel as if the scene were real; in short, his powers are so various, that he, in some respects, resembles the admirable Crichton.

Such is our description of this new Roscius at the present moment. What he may be hereafter, depends upon his parents and himself. They must be already in possession of affluence from his earnings*, which have been, beyond example, abundant: and as it is intended that he should adopt the stage as a permanent profession, something should be done on the score of education; for it is evident, that more pains have been necessarily taken to cultivate his memory, than to instruct his mind; and that he has hitherto become better acquainted with words than with ideas.

Let it be recollected, that all our great actors endeavoured, by study, to add to the advantages, or supply the defects of education; and that, although they have held in no small estimation,

“The scenic triumph, and the loud applause,
The robe of purple, and the people’s gaze;”

yet even they have, at times, experienced the

* In 1805, young Betty got from fifty to one hundred pounds per night. In 1728, the celebrated Lavinia Fenton, afterwards Duchess of Bolton, for a salary of fifteen shillings deserted the Haymarket for Covent-garden; and deemed herself enriched, when, after performing Polly in the Beggar’s Opera, she was raised to thirty shillings per week.

caprice of fortune. It is a well known fact, that the greatest of our players, although backed by Nature and Shakspeare, was overborne, for a while, by the torrent of Rich and pantomime; and that he retired for a time, from mere disgust. By unceasing study and attention, however, he rendered himself a complete master of his art, and, in his turn, triumphed over the muscular exertions of flying harlequins; the mechanical dexterity of showmen and scene-shifters, and all the pageantry introduced by this rival. It is thus, and thus only, that young Betty can ever obtain excellence; and it is by this means alone that he may, at length, be enabled to equal, for it is hardly possible to suppose that he will ever excel, the veteran actors of the last age. Premature powers, after blazing forth like a meteor, have suddenly become dim, as if Nature had been exhausted.

It is by a judicious course of study, by toil and industry alone, that lasting fame can be attained. With the assistance of these, young Roscius may attain the summit of his art. He retired at the latter end of last season from the London Houses, and has since been in various parts of England, and played all his principal characters, with not only great success, but with considerable profit.

BEVERLEY, Mr.—This performer is a native of Hull, in Yorkshire; and has been in several country companies. He opened a theatre at Sheerness, in conjunction with Mr. Russell, of Margate, and now of Drury-lane; but the scheme was unsuccessful. He married a sister of Miss Chapman, and through her interest procured an engagement at Covent-garden, where

he appeared for the first time, October 1, 1800, in David, in *The Rivals*. Mrs. Beverley, who has performed at Margate, &c. made her first appearance at Covent-garden, in *Cherry, Beaux Stratagem*, September 20, 1801. Mr. Beverley is reported to have, what is termed in the theatre, *a quick study*; by that means he has often appeared in good characters, from the indisposition of other performers, and frequently with no discredit to his reputation. His forte appears to be pert servants, &c.

BILLINGTON, Mrs.—The father of this celebrated singer and actress was a German musician, and her mother a celebrated singer at Vauxhall: the daughter's first introduction to the public was at the Hay-market theatre, in a concert for the benefit of Mrs. Weichsell; after which she officiated at many private and public concerts. About 1782 she married Mr. Billington, and applied her mind to the stage. Accordingly she engaged with Mr. Daly, the Dublin manager, and her husband likewise, for the orchestra. Her reception was favourable, though she frequently performed to empty benches. She left Mr. Daly, and went to Capel-street theatre, but soon after returned to Smock-alley. Her recommendations to Mr. Harris were so great, that she made her first appearance at Covent-garden by command of *Their Majesties*, in *Rosetta*, in *Love in a Village*, February 13, 1786, and gradually acquired the reputation of a first-rate singer. In 1794 she made the tour of Italy, where she received the most distinguished honours.

The death of Mr. Billington happened suddenly at Naples; and in 1797 she was induced

to enter again into the marriage state. Her second husband, Mr. Floressent, is a native of Lyons, and son of a banker there. He belonged to the French army, but resigned his post when married, and settled in the neighbourhood of Venice, upon an estate purchased by his wife, whence originated the report of her marriage with a Venetian nobleman.

On her sudden and unexpected return to London, she received proposals from the Opera-house, Drury-lane, and Covent-garden. Mr. Harris made personal application, and so far succeeded, that her first re-appearance was at his theatre, in *Mandane*, *Artaxerxes*, 1801, which character she also played at Drury-lane, and repeated several nights at both theatres.

Since the above period she has been (with the exception of the present season) engaged at the King's Theatre, Hay-market, where she distinguished herself as a first-rate singer in the comic department of the opera. By her first husband she had but one child, which died in its infancy; she has been, however, a mother to a young lady, now sixteen years of age, and in a convent at Brussels, whom she adopted when a twelve-month old, and is still responsible for her education.

It is reported that this lady has retired for ever from public life, and means to reside for the greatest part of the year, at her cottage in Wales.

BLANCHARD, WILLIAM—Was born in York in the year 1769, where his uncle is an eminent printer, and proprietor of a newspaper, and to whom the nephew was apprenticed. At the age of seventeen, and in the year 1786, he left his

uncle, for the profession of an actor, and joined a company of comedians in Derbyshire, then under the management of a Mr. Welsh.

He made his first appearance under the assumed name of Bentley, in the part of Allen-a-Dale, in the comic opera of Robin Hood: the reception he experienced was highly flattering, and such as at once determined him to adhere to the theatrical profession. Meeting with uniform encouragement, he was induced, after the lapse of a year or two, to resume his family name of Blanchard, and soon took the lead in the heroic walks of the drama, as the representative of Romeo, Barnwell, and Young Norval.

Elevated with success, he soon afterwards became a manager, and opened a theatre at Penrith, in Cumberland; Hexham, in Northumberland; Barnard Castle, and Bishop Auckland, county of Durham. He, however, soon relinquished a scheme from which he had reaped little else than trouble, anxiety, and disappointment.

In the year 1793 he was engaged by Mr. Brunton, of the Norwich company. Here he had ample scope for the exercise of his talents, being actively employed in almost every varied range of the drama. In particular, his performance of rustic characters, old men, smart servants, suitors, &c. procured him considerable applause, and rendered him an established favourite throughout that circuit. His growing reputation attracted the notice of the Covent-garden managers, who engaged him for five years, previous to the commencement of the season of 1800.

Mr. Blanchard accordingly made his *début* on the metropolitan stage on the 1st of October of the above year, in the character of Acres, in the

Rivals, and that of Crack, in the musical entertainment of the Turnpike Gate; in both of which parts he acquitted himself with universal satisfaction to the public.

The variety of characters he has assumed in play, farce, and opera, enables us now to speak more at large on his professional exertions. His delineation of the Marquis de Grand Chateau, in the Cabinet, is entitled to our most unqualified approbation: he enters with the utmost skill into every lineament of the old beau, and pourtrays his peculiarities with the nicest discrimination; indeed, it is nature concealing art. No parts try the strength of an actor's genius so much as those of Shakspeare; and it is possible for a performer to get public credit in sustaining a modern character, such as a coxcomb, &c. without being able to do common justice to the labours of the immortal bard; but Blanchard has the ability to decorate the beauties of the poet in inestimable colours, of which we have a proof in his personification of Fluellen, in Henry the Fifth; and if the reiterated plaudits of a London audience may be considered a sanction to our opinion, we must be permitted to pronounce it an excellent piece of playing. His Pistol, in the Second Part of Henry the Fourth, was given in warm and animated tints, but free from unjust extravagance. Mungo, in the musical entertainment of the Padlock, he plays with great humour, and sings his songs with the best possible effect. There are also a variety of other characters in which we have seen Mr. Blanchard with great satisfaction, and which induce us to consider him a valuable acquisition to the London stage. He is a married man, and has a large family.

BLAND, Mrs.—Is the daughter of an Italian jewess, of the name of Romanzini, and was first introduced into public life by a Mr. Cady, hair-dresser to the Royal Circus, who heard and approved of her voice, while an infant; and by the consent of her mother, she was engaged at a small salary. She soon distinguished herself by her wit, humour, and pretty manner of singing, and rapidly advanced in the good opinion of her audience. Miss Romanzini soon aspired to a regular stage, and was engaged by Mr. Daly, manager of the Dublin theatre, where she was well received. The manager was so well pleased with his new actress, that he very soon whispered in her ear the soft language of love: his visits and attention did not escape the timid eye of her mother, who, apprehensive that her daughter's virtue was in danger, took Mr. Daly a-side, and remonstrated nearly in the following words:—"Vat dust you vant vit my little black ting? You are always running after and pulling my little black ting; you have one very fine voman of your own, so I beg you vill let my little black ting alone." This check had the desired effect. Mr. Daly never afterwards shewed any symptoms of affection for his popular actress.

When Mrs. Wrighten left the stage, the managers found great difficulty in supplying her place. Among others, Miss Romanzini was engaged for that purpose; and in a short time she proved herself an excellent substitute. The public were greatly pleased with her performance of the Page, in *Richard Cœur de Lion*: the song of *The Merry Dance I dearly love*, added much to the popularity of the piece, and her fame.

In the summer of 1789 she went to Liverpool, and became a favourite with the inhabitants of that place, both as an actress and a concert-singer. About this period she married Mr. Bland, brother to Mrs. Jordan, by whom she has several children. This lady, both as an actress and a singer, affords much pleasure. An unfortunate malady, occasioned by the accidental loss of a child, deprived the public of her performances for two seasons.

BOOTH, BARTON, Esq.—This celebrated tragedian, was nearly related to the Earls of Warrington, and was born 1681, in Lancashire; whence his father, with his whole family, removed to town, and settled in Westminster, 1684. Mr. Booth, the youngest of their sons, was educated at Westminster School, by Doctor Busby, under whom he became an excellent scholar. While at school, he became very fond of poetry, and often repeated poetical performances, and parts of plays, in all which he discovered a very promising genius for the stage; but his first encouragement in *acting* came from his master, at the rehearsal of a Latin play, in which he performed with great applause.

The following part of a prologue, was spoken at Westminster School, which evidently discovers their high esteem for Mr. Booth as an actor:

“ Your antique actors, as we read,
No more than anticks were indeed;
With wide-mouth’d masks their babes to fright,
They kept the countenance from sight.
Now, faces on the stage are shown;
Nor speak they with their tongues alone;
But in each look a force there lies,
That speaks the passion to the eyes.

See, then, which best deserve our praise,
The vizard or the human face?
Old Roscius to *our* Booth must bow;
’Twas then but Art, ’tis Nature now.”

He was intended for the church, but as he had received such early praises of his blooming qualifications for an *actor*, and that from persons of great importance, it was not to be wondered at that his inclination led him to the stage; in pursuance of which, and to avoid being sent to the university, he ran away from school at the age of seventeen, and went to Ireland with Mr. Asbury, then master of the company at Dublin. Here he was soon distinguished by his theatrical abilities, and, after a stay of three seasons, he returned to England, and was recommended to Mr. Betterton. His first character on the English stage was Maximus, in the tragedy of *Valentinian*; in this and other parts he acquired considerable fame, which was afterwards stamped by his performance in the tragedy of *Cato*, which was brought on the stage in 1712. His reputation procured him a share in the management of the theatre; and a new license being procured, his name was added to those of Cibber, Wilks, and Dogget; but the latter gentleman was so chagrined at the addition, that he threw up his share. He was now in the highest reputation as an actor; but his health beginning to decline, though only in the thirty-third year of his age, he could not perform as often as usual, and consequently when he did, he drew crowded audiences. He died of a complication of diseases, May 18th, 1733.

Aaron Hill has been very profuse in his praises of Mr. Booth, and we believe not undeservedly. He had a fine poetical genius, as appears from some translations and imitations

of his beloved Horace; and his beautiful song of Sweet are the Charms of her I love, &c. may justly be reckoned a master-piece in its kind. For many years before his death, he talked of putting up some memorial in Westminster-Abbey for Mr. Betterton, but those promises were never performed. He has, indeed, by the denomination of three streets in Westminster, viz. Cowley-street, Barton-street, and Booth-street, perpetuated the memory of Mr. Cowley (whose writings he professed a value for, beyond any other English poet) and the name of himself and family.

BOLTON, Miss—The father of this young lady is an attorney at law, in great practice, and is much esteemed for the united qualities of a good lawyer and an honest man.

His daughter, who is under his immediate care, made her first appearance on the Covent-garden boards in the character of Polly, in the Beggar's Opera, and was received with the most flattering tokens of public approbation. She has a good voice, which appears capable of great improvement, and as she gets familiar with the business of the stage, will lose that embarrassment of action which very often accompanies a first essay. It is said that she is very accomplished, and in every way prepared for the profession of which she has become enamoured. With such requisites, and a due attention to study, she will soon arrive at some eminence in the theatre.

BOYCE, Miss—This young lady is of respectable parents. She has been on the stage about four years. Her talents have been employed in

various branches of the drama; but generally in tragedy and sentimental comedy. On the indisposition of different female performers, she has assumed several prominent characters at a very short notice; and we have observed her delineation of them never inferior to their original representatives. She delivers her author with becoming propriety; is animated yet chaste; and always interests her audience, from the natural and artless simplicity which accompanies her professional exertions. Her person is rather small, but well made, and her features are strikingly expressive. With the encouragement of the manager she will, no doubt, become a favourite actress.

BRACEGIRDLE, Mrs.—This lady retired from the stage about thirty years before Mr. Garrick's first appearance, and at that time was visited by many persons of condition and taste, from whom she heard the most extravagant account of this young actor's merit. Colley Cibber, however, with whom she happened to have a conversation after Garrick's performance of Bayes, in the comedy of the Rehearsal, spoke of him with affected derogation: saying, he was well enough, but not superior to his son Theophilus, who had little more to recommend him in the part, than pertness and vivacity; but this lady reproving his malignity, generously said, "Come, come, Cibber, tell me if there is not something like envy in your character of this young gentleman? The actor who pleases every body must be a man of merit."

The old man felt the force of this sensible rebuke: he took a pinch of snuff, and frankly replied, "Why faith, Bracey, I believe you are

right—the young fellow is clever.” This lady had acquired a handsome fortune by her theatrical abilities. She died September 12, 1748.

BRAHAM, JOHN—Is descended from the German stock of the Jewish nation, and is the son of reputable parents who resided in Goodman’s-fields, where the subject of this memoir was born. Having in his earliest years the misfortune to become an orphan, the seasonable and affectionate attention of a near relation supplied in a great measure the loss of his parents. But to whatever degree this kindness might extend, it probably would never have induced the development of those powers which were one day to fascinate every cultivated ear, had not fortune provided a patron with a judgment qualified to appreciate and improve the dawning gifts of nature, and a heart formed to cherish and protect unconscious genius.

Happily for young Braham, when he was about twelve years old, Leoni, of Covent-garden theatre, became acquainted with his musical endowments, and instantly felt in them a claim to his encouragement and protection: that admired performer, accordingly, in the pure spirit of philanthropy, took upon himself the double charge of father and tutor; of providing for and instructing the youth whose promised excellence engaged his affections; and he enjoyed the gratification of witnessing the rapid expansion of those talents, the early indications of which had attracted his benevolent notice: indeed, so extraordinary were the advances of his pupil in the road to pre-eminence, that before he reached the age of fifteen, he, in some particular acquisitions, left his tutor behind him, who in turn, actually

became the scholar, and produced in his songs many a graceful novelty, for which he was indebted to the suggestions of his young *protégé*. These instances are, however, to be received as proofs of Braham's improving *taste*, rather than of his *scientific* progress; since Leoni, though so charming and justly-admired a performer, went no farther in his musical acquirements, than to what regards *taste* and *manner*; and being generously determined to make something more of his pupil than a mere singer, he engaged for him a more qualified master, by whom he was instructed on the piano-forte, and in musical theory. About this time, the project of the late Mr. John Palmer, for establishing a theatre in the Liberties of the Tower Hamlets, was brought into operation, and young Braham's first public effort was, among other novelties, presented to the audiences of Wellclose-square.

His voice, though distinguished by its compass, which extended from the tenor B flat, to B flat in alt, was still more remarkable for its peculiar sweetness of tone; and the power of execution procured by juvenile practice, was aided by an expression and sentiment indicative of mental manhood. The variety of entertainments at this theatre, afforded an opening for the display of Braham's early powers, which generally shone forth in some of the bravura songs, at that time rendered popular by the performance of Madame Mara: among which, he was particularly happy in his execution of *The Soldier tir'd of War's alarms*, and *Se libera non sono*, a bravura song composed by Gresnic. The regular pieces in which he appeared at that theatre, were in the *Birth Day*, composed by Carter; and *Hero and Leander*, by Reeves; in the former

of which he performed the part of Cupid, and in the latter, that of Hymen. He at this time had not acquired the art of sight-singing, but was uncommonly ready at catching the *motivo* of an air, and the meaning of the author. About this period, being in his eighteenth year, his voice broke, and he, for a while, retired to private practice and theoretical study.

On account of some domestic concerns, Mr. Leoni was under the necessity of going to Jamaica, and Mr. Braham had the misfortune to find himself once more in an orphan state; but with this difference in his favour, that the publicity of his late powers had not only produced him numerous admirers, but many friends; among whom, the most conspicuous were the Goldsmids, a family as well known to the public as respected by their private connexions. Patronized by them, and other distinguished amateurs, he taught the piano-forte, and his new avocation afforded an ample provision for his present occasions. But though by the failure of his vocal organs the power of execution was checked, the impulse of nature remained, and instrumental music was but a temporary resource; the restoration of his voice was a circumstance not only "devoutly to be wished," but was most earnestly sought; and every musical society he visited, witnessed his strenuous exertions to regain that excellence which had procured him so much celebrity.

His voice, by care and constant application, soon began to assume a pleasantness of tone, as well as a considerable degree of strength; when accidentally meeting with Mr. Ashe, who was struck with a purity of taste, from which he predicted the greatest future eminence, that cele-

brated flutist advised him to accept an engagement then proffered him from Bath, to which he listened, and accordingly, in the year 1794, made his *debut* as a tenor singer at that periodical resort of fashion. Rauzzini, the liberal and enlightened—the hospitable and accomplished—the generous lover of merit—voluntarily became the patron and the improver of Braham, who, with gratitude and pride, acknowledges the obligations due to his tutor and protector, and imputes most of the leading features of his present vocal excellence to the invaluable lessons he received from that able and judicious master.

The fame of such pre-eminent vocal powers as procured Mr. Braham the admiration of every real judge of fine singing, could not long be confined to Bath; and the late ingenious, scientific, and tasteful Stephen Storace, composer to Drury-lane theatre, among many other lovers of refined vocal ability in the metropolis, was induced to take a journey to that city to hear him. The result was, an immediate engagement, to perform for a certain number of nights at the above theatre; and Mr. Braham accordingly made his first appearance in London as a tenor singer, in the spring of 1796.

The extraordinary *eclat* with which Mr. Braham acquitted himself on Drury-lane stage, induced the managers to produce, with all possible speed, a new opera, for the further display of his shining abilities; but unfortunately, while the scenic decorations were preparing, Mr. Storace, to whose polished genius the composition of the music was confided, sunk in the midst of his task to an early grave; the victim of a too incessant and too intense devotion to professional avocations. The operations for the

opera, however, proceeded, and the loss of original and departed talent was compensated in the best way time and the situation of the theatre would admit, by resorting to adaptations and selections, formed, in part, by Signora Storace, the composer's sister, and long established favourite of the public; when at length Mr. Braham made his *entré* in Mahmoud, and was received with all that warmth of applause due to his interesting tone of voice, clear articulation, impressive intonation, and free and felicitous execution.

During this season, Mr. Braham also sang at Salomon's concerts, and at the Hanover-square rooms, as well as at the oratorios, and many private musical parties, to the delight of his various and numerous audiences, and to the increase of his vocal reputation.

Notwithstanding the elevation he now attained as a public singer, Mr. Braham had acquired too nice a discrimination, and too scrupulous a judgment, to be wholly satisfied with his present acquisitions; and he accordingly left England, in company with Signora Storace, for Paris. The revolutionary furor had not so absorbed the minds and feelings of the Parisians, as to extinguish taste, and musical presentiments; and their performances in the French capital, were listened to with the most eager delight. Though they originally designed to quit Paris in three weeks, the courteous attentions they universally experienced, so gratefully operated on their feelings, as to superinduce the determination to prolong their visit; and they actually remained there eight months. During their residence at Paris, they received increasing testimonies of public

approbation and private esteem; and the concerts they gave were thronged, at the price of a *Louis* a ticket, though the general admittance to concerts was only six *francs*; and had pecuniary emolument been the sole object of their visit to that metropolis, they might have had the superintendence of a newly-established opera, at the annual salary of fourteen hundred *Louis*.

But professional improvement was the grand desideratum with Mr. Braham, and in the ensuing May he quitted that capital, and set out for Italy, amply provided with letters of recommendation and protection, from the *Directory* to the ambassadors of France in the several Italian States. The first display of Mr. Braham's talents on the Italian stage, was at Florence, in the character of Ulysses, where he met with that warm reception due to high professional pretensions.

While he was there, that celebrated vocal performer, David, invited him to dinner; in the evening they sang to each other several airs. One of Mr. Braham's was the *bravura* composed for him by Rauzzini; after his execution of which, David said, "Nella mia gioventu ho potuto far l'istesso;"—in my youth I could do the same. And being asked who he thought the best tenor in Italy, he answered, "Dopo di me l'Inglese;"—next to me, the Englishman. After delighting the refined amateurs of the capital of Tuscany, and listening to the various specimens of vocal excellence exhibited in that celebrated and beautiful city, he proceeded to Milan, and thence to Genoa, where he performed with Marchesi, in the opera of *Lodoiska*, thirty nights successively. In this piece they sang

a beautiful duet, which excited such a *furor*, as the Italians term it, that the audience insisted on their coming forward three several times to receive their applause. At this place he was induced to prolong his stay for the advantage of receiving instructions in composition from the highly-ingenious and able Maestro Isola, of the taste of whose school he has since given such pleasing samples.

General Massena obliged him and Storace to perform in an opera; and the Florentines, in a letter addressed to him, acknowledged the superior claims produced by England, to the *palm* in vocal performance, in Mrs. Billington, Signora Storace, and himself: nor should it be forgotten, that the siege of Genoa having taken place while Mr. Braham and Storace were in that city, their professional talents ranked so high in the general estimation, as to command, amidst all the horrors and outrages of a furious political warfare, perfect security and respect.

At Genoa Mr. Braham received advantageous offers from the operatical managers at Naples; but the distracted state of that country little according with the mental composure of mind necessary to that improvement which formed the grand object of his travels, he declined their acceptance, and shaped his course to Leghorn, where he received the most flattering attention from Lord Nelson. With that naval hero, he and Storace had once the honour to dine, on board the *Foudroyant*, and there to sing to the Queen of Naples, who visited the ship on purpose to hear them. From Naples they went to Venice, afterwards to Trieste, and thence to Hamburgh; at each of which places, the plaudits he received kept pace with his high de-

serts, and demonstrated the taste of his crowded and gratified audiences.

His growing fame on the Continent reached England, and while he was at the last mentioned city he received various solicitations for his return to London. Among them were offers from Mr. Harris, the proprietor of Covent-garden theatre, of such a nature as to induce him to forego other pending engagements, especially with the theatres of Milan and Vienna.

At length he left Hamburgh for London, where with Signora Storace he arrived early in the winter of 1801, but did not appear on the Covent-garden boards till after Christmas, when they took their parts in a new opera, written by Mr. Prince Hoare, and called, Chains of the Heart; the music composed by Mr. Mazzinghi and Mr. Reeve. Mr. Braham, even in the first strain of his song, evinced all his reported improvement, both in his style of expression and the adjustment of his voice. His cadences were rich, graceful, and highly artificial; his tones more firm, yet more mellow and interesting than when he left England; and his accent clearer and more impressive; his *roulades* were given with an increased ease and volatility; his *portamento* was commanding, and his *register* or compass, which most happily blended the *voce di testa* with the *voce di petto*, was considerably extended both above and below. The Chains of the Heart having failed of its expected attractions, a new opera, written by T. Dibdin, called the Cabinet, was immediately put into preparation, and the production of the music committed to that excellent dramatic composer, Mr. Shield. But that gentleman having declined the task, the pressure for time did not admit of any single com-

poser's undertaking it ; the different songs were accordingly distributed to a variety of hands ; and Mr. Braham produced his own, as also some of those sung by Signora Storace. The success of this opera induced the manager to again resort to various masters for the production of operatical music ; and *Family Quarrels*, another piece by the same author, was supplied, though not with equal success, from the same multifarious sources.

In consequence of a dispute which took place between the managers of Covent-garden and Mr. Braham in the spring of 1805, he and Madame Storace joined the Drury-lane House, where they continue to be very attractive to the treasury of the theatre. Part of the music in the opera of *False Alarms*, or *my Cousin*, is by Mr. Braham ; and the music of the air, *A Tear and a Smile*, together with his singing of it, has considerably increased his popularity.

BRUNTON, Mr.—This gentleman was born in London, in the year 1775. His father, late manager of the Norwich theatre, intended him for the law, but the son preferring the study of acts of plays to that of acts of parliament, joined a company at Lincoln. On his return home, he assisted his father in his band, for which he was well qualified. His inclination for the profession of an actor still increasing, he appeared with the approbation of his friends, on the Norwich stage in 1799, and met with considerable applause. His first appearance at Covent-garden was in *Frederic*, in *Lover's Vows*, Sept. 22, 1800 ; after which he performed *Hamlet*, *Romeo*, &c. with more than ordinary success. With the assistance of his father, Mr. Brunton has managed the concerns of the theatre at Brighton with consi-

derable credit, and under the avowed patronage of the Prince of Wales. As an actor of general use, this gentleman is a great acquisition to Mr. Harris.

His figure is well formed; his features are regular and expressive, and he frequently gives importance to an indifferent character, which in other hands would not interest the audience. Though private character has nothing to do with an actor's talent, yet, when it accompanies his professional exertions, he has greater claims to public notice and esteem. Mr. Brunton supports a highly respectable private character, as a good member of society, an affectionate husband, and a tender parent of a numerous offspring.

BRUNTON, LOUISA, Miss—This elegant woman is the sixth daughter of the father of the above performer, and sister to Mrs. Merry, the celebrated actress, at present concerned in some of the principal theatres in America. She was born in February, 1785. Miss Brunton's first appearance on the stage was at Covent-garden, the 5th of October, 1803.

The part selected for her *debut* was Lady Townly, which she supported with a degree of vivacity and elegance, assisted by uncommon graces of person and beauty of countenance, that afforded the highest promise of future excellence. Her next character was Beatrice, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, in which she confirmed the favourable opinion entertained of her merit, and she has since performed a variety of parts, both in tragedy and comedy, much to the satisfaction of the public, and to the advantage of the theatre, of which she

is so much an ornament. It should be observed, that till within a very short time of her playing Lady Townly, Miss Brunton had no intention of applying herself to the stage. We believe it was in consequence of the strong recommendations of Mr. Harris, that she first appeared before the public. Her success has fully justified his hopes, and we may with truth remark, that we have seldom witnessed an instance of greater improvement in so short a space of time. We may venture to augur, that with the continuation of the manager's patronage, and the support and encouragement of the public, (to which both her private character and professional exertions so much entitle her) she will in a few years become the Farren of the day, and bask under all those honours which accompany the united possession of beauty, elegance of figure, and highly gifted talents.

BYRNE, Mr.—Was brought up from his infancy as a dancer, and for several years performed at many provincial theatres; he afterwards engaged at Covent-garden, where he got into public favour. He then went to America, where he continued for several years. On his return to England, he obtained the situation of ballet-master at Drury-lane theatre. In this capacity he produced some ballets and pantomimes: *Actæon* and *Diana*, *Old Harlequin's Fireside*, &c. His son, about five years old, dances and performs *Cupid*, &c. in a surprizing way.

CATALANI, ANGELICA—This celebrated singer and actress, is a native of Sinigalia, in the neighbourhood of Rome, where she was born

in the year 1782, and where her father was a silversmith, and lived in high respectability, but from the incursions of the French he lost all his property, and he* and a part of his family are now living at Florence, on the bounty of his daughter, our vocal phenomenon. Very early in life, she was noticed by Cardinal Onorati, who being delighted with the power and sweetness of her voice, recommended her to the Convent of Gubio, with such injunction on its masters with respect to the care and attention of their fair pupil's talents, that soon rendered her the accomplished subject of general esteem and conversation. During her residence in this house of learning and religious repose, the fame of her extraordinary voice brought persons from distant parts of Italy to hear her sing. At the age of fifteen she left the above Convent, from the inability of her parents to defray the expences of her education. The unexpected revolution in her father's affairs first induced her to become a public performer, and with that view she went to Milan, where she made her first *debut* in an opera, in which the celebrated Signor Marchesi performed.

The great success which accompanied her first exertions having circulated through Italy, and the valuable instructions she received in music from the above performer, soon gave her professional eminence that produced lucrative offers from the different theatres of the Continent.

* Signor Catalani has three daughters and two sons, one of whom accompanied Madame Catalani to this country, and is employed in the orchestra of the opera, as Voxhumaine player. One of Catalani's sisters is married to an Italian nobleman, whose fortune supports them in some degree of splendour in that country.

After having delighted the inhabitants of Venice, Verona, and Mantua, for three years in her professional capacity, she was called to Lisbon, where she continued five years, enjoying every kind of attention her heart could possibly pant for. In this city Monsieur Valebreque, an officer in Moreau's army, fell in love with Madame Catalani during her performance; and it is said that a presentiment on first seeing each other, dictated the following remark: "If I ever marry, that gentleman (meaning the above) will be my husband," and the same sentiment was expressed by M. Valebreque. After a short courtship they were married, and continue to live in mutual love and esteem. She stood so high in the estimation of the court of Portugal, that when she signified her intention of leaving Lisbon, the consort of the Prince Regent wrote a letter to her mother, the Queen of Spain, in which she recommended Madame Catalani to her Majesty, in terms of the strongest respect and admiration. On her arrival at the court of Spain, her Majesty received her with the most familiar kindness, and was profuse in her royal presents to our favourite heroine. The King also gave many proofs of his respect for her moral demeanor and extraordinary talents, one of which was the free use of the Opera-house, by his command, for the performance of a concert; and her reputation had advanced so rapidly in Spain, that the grandees of the court fixed the prices of the first seats in the opera at six ounces of gold, which is equal to twenty-one guineas. Even at this high price the opera was crowded, and the receipt of the house, independent of presents, amounted to two thousand five hundred guineas. From Spain Madame Catalani

went to Paris, on her way to London, where her reception was the most flattering, and where she gave four concerts, the price of admission to which, was increased from the usual sum of six francs (ten shillings) to one pound five shillings, and each of these entertainments produced to her forty thousand francs.

The celebrity this beautiful woman had acquired in Italy and Lisbon, soon reached England, and as soon created a wish on the part of the amateurs in the opera, to attach such an acquisition to the Italian opera of this country. The late much respected Mr. Goold, ever anxious to gratify the public with the best assemblage of talent he could procure from the theatres of the Continent, lost no time in finding a proper channel through which he could make overtures to Madame Catalani; and by the sole assistance of Captain Edwards, of Surrey-street, Strand (a gentleman of high respectability, who was formerly in the Portuguese service at Lisbon, and on terms of friendship and correspondence with the above lady), Mr. Goold engaged her for three years, at 2000*l.* per season; her engagement to commence with the present season, 1807.

On the 13th of December, 1806, she made her first appearance at the King's Theatre, in the Hay-market, in the character of Semiramide, in the serious opera of that name. On seeing the enthusiasm that she inspired in this capital, we are surprized to think that a person of her extraordinary gifts had not been put in requisition by the imperial government of France, in the same manner that Crescentini had been at Vienna, but six months before Madame Catalani's arrival in Paris; particularly when we consider

that the French papers were so extremely lavish in their eulogiums on her personal charms, and highly gifted endowments. We, however, suppose that the French government was less occupied at that time with pleasures, than the projects of their intended subjugation of Germany.

After having heard Madame Catalani, we confess that we found her infinitely superior to the eulogium of either Italian criticism or the French journals. The Parisians had only enjoyed her singing at concerts, which precluded the use of her graceful action. Her voice, which is singularly powerful, is as melodious in her high as in her low notes, and she can run from the highest note to the lowest, with considerable ease, and extraordinary flexibility, accompanied with astonishing taste. It is also remarkable for being extremely clear, and as extended as the imagination. She is not only a singer of the first eminence, but ranks among our most distinguished actresses. Her figure is finely formed, and her deportment very majestic; she has features full of expression, eyes dark and brilliant, which unite loveliness with energy, and renders her face capable of portraying all the grand passions of the soul.

Her performance displays profound sensibility, coupled with great attention to the business of the scene, and her singing acquires a new charm, by the manner in which she varies the execution of her airs. It is difficult to determine whether the beauty she possesses, the gracefulness of her attitudes, her acting, and sensibility of feeling, or the vigour and docility of her organ in singing, has the greatest claim to our admiration. It is, however, the association of physical and acquired qualities which adorn this

lady in the highest degree, that constitute her great value to the King's Theatre, and the public. Since her performance of *Semiramide*, she has appeared in *Argenis*, in the revived serious opera of *Il Ritorno di Serse*. The piece was recomposed by Portagallo, to accord with her voice; and her personification of this character, not only adds fresh laurels to her brow, but is very lucrative to the proprietors of the theatre.

Madame Catalani having been indisposed two or three times, the proprietors of the opera were either obliged to change the entertainment, or not open the house. This serious disappointment to the public, gave birth to much ill-natured and unjust remark, which went to accuse her of affecting illness, in order to indulge her caprice, and trifle with the public. If there had been any truth in this report, we should arraign such conduct in terms of the utmost severity, but on inquiry (and we speak from good authority), we found that she did not merit those severe animadversions which were circulated against her from a false impression of her conduct. The difference of climate, and the versatile state of our weather, greatly affected the health of this lady, whose native clime has a most delightful serenity of atmosphere. It is therefore not surprizing, that a delicate female leaving a warm and genial air, for England in the month of November, should severely feel the fogs and damps peculiar to London.

It is a common remark, that where nature has been profuse in her gifts, she has counter-balanced her favours with a defect more or less obvious to others. Madame Catalani, with all her perfections, is liable to lose the use of her voice for several minutes together, without

being able to account for such a momentary suspension of vocal ability. This was no uncommon misfortune to her at Lisbon, and till the audience of that capital were acquainted with this infirmity, they expressed their disapprobation at her being obliged to leave the opera in the middle of her performance, from a sudden deprivation of voice.

The amusements of Portugal are under the direction of the police, and if performers in any degree neglect their duty, and offend the public, the officer who attends the opera during the whole of the performance, will immediately send them to prison. It is therefore not likely, that Madame Catalani would have disappointed the public of Lisbon repeatedly through caprice, when such an act of folly would have subjected her to a very serious punishment. We mention this, to shew that even in a purer air than England, she has been subject to a temporary loss of voice, and without which she could not conduct the progress of the opera with any effect.

However independent of the above remarks, we have authority for saying, that this lady has, in no instance whatever, withdrawn herself from the duties of her profession; and whenever the public have been deprived of her exertions, it has been from that natural affliction incident to the human frame. She has been repeatedly heard to declare, "That she feels most sensibly the unparalleled favours of the public, and in return for their kindness, she cannot exert herself too much for their entertainment. This lively sense of her duty to the town, and their goodness to her, she hopes to keep in strict remembrance, "while memory holds a seat," &c.

CAMPBELL, Mrs.—The maiden-name of this actress was Wallis. She was born at Richmond, in Yorkshire, and performed on the stage when a child, under Mr. Daly's management in Dublin. In these children's characters she discovered uncommon merit, and for her father's benefit, announced in *her* name, she caricatured the fine lady in Lethe. After this she accompanied her father to different provincial theatres, where she soon improved, and fortunately met with the kind patronage of Lord Roslyn and his lady. At this time her mother died, and her father was left with eight children, of whom she was the oldest, when her generous patroness availed herself of this opportunity of extending her liberality. Having now procured an engagement at Bath, she became such a favourite there that she soon received an offer from Mr. Harris of 18*l.* per week, for a stipulated time; which she accepted, and continued in his theatre as a favourite with the town, till she retired from public life in the year 1797, in consequence of her marriage with Mr. Campbell.

CARLES, Mr.—It is reported that this gentleman is related to several very respectable families. After improving his talents at various country theatres, he appeared some few seasons ago at Covent-garden theatre, in the character of Othello, and continued to perform during the season. He is now a member of the Drury-lane company, and supports that line of characters which Mr. Holland sustained with so much satisfaction to the public. The figure of Mr. Carles is good, and his features are expressive. The few characters he has already represented,

give proof of talent, that will, we doubt not, be very useful to the theatre.

CATLEY, ANNE—This celebrated actress and singer was born in the year 1745, of poor parents, her father being only a gentleman's coachman, and afterwards the keeper of a public-house near Norwood, known by the name of The Horns. At the age of fifteen, being found to possess some musical talents, she was bound an apprentice to Mr. Bates, a composer of some eminence, and resided in the house of his father. Her first appearance in public was at Vauxhall, in the summer of 1762; and on the 8th of October, in the same year, she appeared for the first time, on the stage at Covent-garden, in the character of the Pastoral Nymph, in *Comus*. She was at this period remarkable for little more than the beauty of her person, and a diffidence in public, which she soon got rid of. In the next year she became the object of attention, from an application to the Court of King's Bench, for an information against her master, Bates, Sir Francis Delaval, and one Fraine, an attorney, charging them with a conspiracy: the first, in assigning her over to Sir Francis Delaval, for the purpose of prostitution; and the last, for drawing the several deeds used on the occasion. It appeared by the affidavits, that Sir Francis, while the lady lived with Mr. Bates the elder, had insinuated himself into her favour, and soon after a negotiation was set on foot, which ended in the gallant paying Mr. Bates 200/., and securing him an engagement he had made for her at Marybone-gardens the ensuing season. This transaction coming to the know-

ledge of her father, he caused the application to be made to the Court of King's Bench ; in consequence of which the information was ordered to go against all the defendants, but probably ended in a compromise, as no more was heard about it. That season she sung at Marybone-gardens, and at the end of it went to Ireland, at a salary of forty guineas per night.

In 1770 she appeared again at Covent-garden, and continued to perform a stated number of nights for many succeeding years, much to her own and the manager's advantage. In 1773 she sung at the oratorios at Covent-garden, by which she added to her fortune more than her fame; being, from certain neglects of decorum in her general line of acting, ill-suited to the solemnity of such performances, and having to contend with the more chaste deportment of Mrs. Sheridan at the rival theatre. Being always attentive to economy, in the course of a few years she amassed a considerable fortune; and when her attraction failed, she was enabled to retire to independence. Her last performance was in 1784. She was, to use the words of a diurnal writer, "the favourite of Thalia, the favourite of the town, and the favourite of fortune." She is said to have been married to General Lascelles, at whose house, near Brentford, she died October 14, 1789.

CHAPMAN, Mr.—This very useful performer was educated at Soho School, and has a mind stored with a greater share of literary attainments than is to be found among the generality of performers. For several years before he appeared on the Covent-garden boards, 1805, he played at most of the provincial theatres. The

cast of characters in which he appears most happy, is sentimental old men. We recollect his personification of several of the late Mr. Aickin's parts, at the Hay-market theatre, and however natural the above actor's style of acting was, we are inclined to think that Chapman's exertions have considerably lessened the loss of Mr. Aickin. He is also a good French scholar, and performs Papillon, in the Liar, as well as we have ever seen it represented at either of the winter theatres.

CHERRY, ANDREW—Is the eldest son of the late Mr. John Cherry, an eminent printer and bookseller in the city of Limerick, in Ireland. Andrew was born in the above city on the 11th of January, 1762, and received what is generally called a respectable school education, which his father intended to have completed at the University, as he designed his son for a member of the Church, but owing to some disappointments in life, he was, when eleven years of age, placed under Mr. James Potts, printer and bookseller in Dublin. Becoming soon weary of the printing-office, and attached to the theatre, he engaged with Mr. Martin, a country manager, at Naas, fourteen miles from Dublin, where he made his first appearance in Colonel Feignwell, in *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, for which he received high encomiums, and his share of *ten-pence half-penny*, out of the profits of the night's performance. The towns he visited were small, the receipts of the theatre therefore scarcely furnished an existence for himself and company. Yet such was our hero's enthusiasm for a theatrical profession, that he endured a probation of ten months with this manager, constantly em-

ployed in laborious study of almost all the principal characters in tragedy and comedy, without ever possessing a guinea during the whole of that period; nay, frequently without the means of common sustenance, and so impoverished, yet so industriously inclined to what he had undertaken, that his greatest difficulty generally arose from his want of means to purchase candles, that he might study the characters that were daily allotted to him. In the town of Athlone, a circumstance of particular distress attended our hero, but which he bore with all the magnanimity that dramatic ardour could inspire. The business of the theatre was suspended for a short time, in consequence of the benefits having turned out bad: the manager was resolved not to waste any more bills, but wait for the races, which were to commence in a few days. Our hero being of a timid and bashful turn, and assisted by a portion of youthful pride, was incapable of making those advances, and playing off that train of theatrical tricking, by which means benefits are frequently obtained in the country, and therefore he had been less successful than many of his brethren. His landlady perceiving there was no prospect of payment, satisfied herself for the trifle already due, by seizing on the remnant of our hero's wardrobe; and knowing she could dispose of her lodgings to more advantage during the races, turned him out to the mercy of the winter's wind, which he endured with all his former philosophy. He rambled carelessly about the streets, sometimes quoting passages to himself, both comic and serious, that were analogous to his situation, but without forming one determined idea of where he was to rest his houseless

head. Towards the close of the evening he strolled by accident into the lower part of the theatre, which had formerly been an inn, and was then occupied by a person whose husband had been a serjeant of dragoons, for the purpose of retailing refreshments, &c. to those who visited the theatre. After chatting until it grew late, the woman hinted to our hero that she wished to go to bed, and begged he might retire, upon which he replied in the words of Don John, "I was just thinking of going home, but that I have no lodging." The good woman taking the words literally, inquired into the cause, with which he acquainted her without disguise. Being the mother of a family, she felt severely for his distressed situation: at that time he did not possess a single halfpenny in the world, nor the means of obtaining one. The poor creature shed tears of regret that she could not effectually alleviate his misfortune. He endeavoured to assume a careless gaiety, but the woman's unaffected sorrow brought the reflection of his own disobedience to his mind, and he dropped tears in plenteous libation: in his grief he saw the sorrow of his parents, whom he had deserted, to follow what he began to perceive a mad career, in despite of the many unanswered remonstrances he had received, with a fair promise of forgiveness and affection, should he return "to reason and his shop." This philanthropic female lamented she could not furnish him with a bed, but offered to lend him her husband's cloak, and to procure a bundle of dry hay, that he might sleep in an empty room in her house. His heart was too full to pay his gratitude in words; his eyes thanked her; he wept bitterly, accepted her kind offer, and retired to

rest. The intruding any farther on her kindness was painful to him, as she was struggling to maintain a numerous offspring. He therefore carefully avoided the house at meal times, and wandered through the fields or streets, until he supposed their repasts were finished: at last, overcome by fasting and fatigue, that he could not rest, he rose from his trooper's cloak in the dead of the night, and explored the kitchen, searching the dresser and all its shelves and drawers, in hopes of finding something that might satisfy the cravings of his appetite, but in vain. On his return to his hay-truss, he accidentally struck against the kitchen table, the noise of which he feared might alarm the family; and uncertain of the real cause of his leaving his apartment at that hour, they might naturally suppose that his purpose was to rob the house, as a reward for their hospitality: the idea added to the misery he then suffered; he trembled, he listened but all was quiet; and then renewed his search (for his hunger overcame his fears), and to his gratification he found a large crust of stale bread, which he was afterwards informed had been used for rubbing out some spots of white paint from the very cloak that composed his bedding; he, however, ate it with avidity, as he was entering on the fourth day without the least refreshment, and returned heartfelt thanks to Providence, whose omnipotent hand was stretched in the very critical moment, to save him from the most direful of all possible deaths, starving!

We hope the narrative of our hero's misery will operate on the mind of youth, as a useful lesson, not to suffer the false glow of theatrical display to entice them from those pursuits al-

lotted by their parents for a profession, in which even talent cannot always command competence or respect, and deficiency of talents is sure to meet contempt and penury.

The theatre, during the races, was each night crowded with company, by which means the actors were again indulged with the comforts of good eating and drinking, and our hero provided with the means of returning to his friends, by whom he was received with all the warmth of parental affection. He then resolved to relinquish all ideas of the stage, and attach himself solely to business; but the applause he had received continually rung in his ears, and in the comforts of ease and plenty, he soon forgot the drudgery of study, and the poignant want he was obliged to endure, whilst endeavouring to attain it. In short, he again returned to the profession, when, after making several short excursions of little moment, he enlisted under the banners of Mr. Knipe, a dramatic commander of much esteem in Ireland, and whose daughter Mr. Cherry married at Belfast. The fame which Mr. C. was daily acquiring in the North of Ireland, soon made its way to the capital; and on Mr. Ryder's being engaged at Covent-garden theatre, our hero was called upon by the Dublin manager to supply that gentleman's place, which was considered a service of imminent danger, as Mr. Ryder had been for more than thirty years the unrivalled favourite of a Dublin audience. He made his appearance at Smock-alley theatre in the winter of 1787, in the character of Darby, in the *Poor Soldier*: this was beyond his most sanguine expectations, and he continued for five years under the management of Mr. Daly, in the full possession of public favour, and a range

of comic characters as various as they were extensive.

From the increase of his family, and the payments of the theatre not being quite so certain as the Bank of England;—as the manager, who had *been bred a gentleman*, scorned the idea of any thing that bore a mechanical aspect;—therefore the treasury was not always open on a Saturday; for which sad reason many a luckless wight was frequently constrained to keep a sabbath fast. These inconveniences, together with others arising from an oppressive and tyrannical system of management, induced our hero to turn his thoughts towards an engagement in some of the provincial theatres of England; when he soon obtained a situation in the York theatre, to supply the place of Mr. Fawcett, now the distinguished comedian of Covent-garden. After remaining in the York company three years, he returned to Dublin, where he continued two seasons, and produced two operatical pieces, which were received at Crow-street theatre with general approbation. But from the manager's irregular conduct, he returned to England, and after playing a short time at Manchester* and Birmingham, he became a member of the Bath company, where his professional exertions were held in general estimation.

On the resignation of Mr. King, he obtained an engagement at Drury-lane, and made his first appearance in *Sir Benjamin Dove*, in the comedy of *The Brothers*; and in *Lazarillo*, *Two Strings*

* In 1793, he played *Drugget*, to Lewis's *Sir Charles Racket*, at the theatre-royal Manchester; when in the quarrelling scene, Cherry observed, "Egad he looks as if he was going to eat me." "Eat you!" (replied Lewis), "Yes, d—n me, I would not make two bites of a *Cherry*."

to your Bow, 1801; in both which characters he was well received. He is the author of an opera called *The Outcasts*; or, *Poor Bess and Little Dick*; which was occasionally performed for his benefit; the *Soldier's Daughter*, a comedy, 1804; *The World's Epitome*, comedy, acted at the Haymarket, 1805; and *The Travellers*, an opera, 1806. With the exception of the above comedy brought out at the Hay-market, his pieces are in great favour with the public.

COOKE, GEORGE FREDERICK—This distinguished tragedian was born in the barracks of Dublin, in the year 1756; his father being a subaltern in one of the regiments that composed the garrison. His mother was of Scotch extraction, and by her marriage incurred the displeasure of her family, who, with a very moderate portion of substance, richly abounded in pride. At little more than two years of age, our hero accompanied his father to London, where he continued till the year 1763, when he was placed in a school in the North of England. It was during his residence at this school, which lasted till 1771, that he became infected, as he himself terms it, with the theatrical *mania*.

The first play he ever read, was *Venice Preserv'd*: the first dramatic performance he ever witnessed was the representation of the *Provoked Husband*, in which Mr. James Aickin, late of Drury-lane theatre, acted the part of Lord Townly. From a clergyman in the town, he procured the loan of a complete edition of Shakspeare's works, which may truly be said to have formed the subject both of "his waking and his sleeping thoughts." Diligently he read them by day, and meditated thereon by night;

yet, however exquisite the mental delight he experienced from their perusal, it was not wholly exempt from alloy. All study was now suspended, or at least absorbed, in the more favourite pursuit of the drama: his school exercises were either neglected *in toto*, or slovenly performed. This of course, frequently subjected him to the penal code of school discipline, and induced consequences not the most pleasant to our hero's feelings. The passion, however, for theatricals had taken too deep root to be easily eradicated; and certain opportunities, which now occurred, of giving that passion the means of practical operation, tended still more to rivet and confirm his propensity, by adding the force of habit to the predisposing influence of will.

A party of his school companions having agreed to get up a play among themselves, our hero was consulted on the choice of the drama which, from circumstances, might be supposed best calculated for representation. He immediately fixed on Hamlet, intending to reserve the principal character for himself; but had the mortification to see the part usurped by one of his school-fellows, who founded his claim on seniority. The validity of the plea was admitted by universal suffrage, and young Cooke was obliged to content himself with Horatio. To console him, however, in some measure for this disappointment, he had the gratification of triumphing over his rival, by the superior applause awarded to his performance, though his talents were circumscribed to a part of comparatively small importance. Several actors, who witnessed the representation, gave him the most decided preference.

The next play which our juvenile party enact-

ed, was Cato; in getting up which, a circumstance occurred still more unpropitious and revolting to our hero's feelings. To avoid all cause of altercation, it was agreed to determine the cast of the *Dramatis Personæ* by lot. Cooke drew Lucia, and such was the chagrin he experienced at the idea of wearing a petticoat, instead of strutting in a Roman toga, that the supposed degradation had nearly quenched the ardour of his passion, and crushed his scenic ambition in its very outset. But the plaudits he received, offered a seasonable relief to his irritation.

On his emancipation from school discipline, in 1771, he went to sea, and afterwards embarked in business; but less from inclination than necessity. Accordingly, at the age of twenty-one, he spurned at trade, as an occupation unworthy of his aspiring mind, and coming into possession of a legacy bequeathed him by a distant relation, quitted all employment, to indulge his favourite passion and pursuit. It was not, however, till he had run through his inheritance, that he made his *debut* on the public boards.

His first appearance on any regular stage, was in the spring of 1778, when he performed the part of Castalio, in the Orphan, at the Hay-market theatre, for the benefit of Mrs. Massey; and with such complete success, as determined him to embrace the profession as his future means of support. He played two or three subsequent nights at the Hay-market, and then joined a provincial company. From this period, till the summer of 1786 (with the exception of nearly two years, when a second family windfall enabled him to act the part of the gentleman *à large*), Cooke ran the customary round of Thespian itinerary; passing his noviciate in va-

rious provincial companies, particularly those of Nottingham and Lincoln. In July 1786, he enlisted under the banners of the York manager, Mr. Wilkinson, and came out in the part of Count Baldwin, the same night that Mrs. Siddons made her first appearance at that theatre, in *Isabella*, in the *Fatal Marriage*.

The May following, he repaired to Lancaster, having joined the Newcastle company, with whom he continued four years, performing successively at Newcastle, Chester, Lancaster, Preston, and other towns belonging to that district. In April 1791, he entered into an engagement with the manager of the Manchester theatre, to whom his talents were already experimentally known; Mr. Cooke having previously to his treaty with the York manager, acted at Manchester a whole season with great applause, besides a winter spent at Liverpool. In November 1794, Mr. Cooke visited the capital of the sister kingdom at the pressing invitation of Mr. Daly, at that time director of the Dublin stage.

He returned to England the following year; and in March 1796, re-joined the Manchester company, with whom he stood in high favour and repute; and indeed it reflects no small honour on the taste and penetration of the inhabitants of that town, that, among the foremost to discern, they have been among the foremost likewise to foster and encourage the talents of a man, who owes his professional success entirely to his own intrinsic merit.

In October 1797, Mr. Cooke made a second trip to Dublin, the management of that theatre having devolved into the hands of the present patentee, Mr. Jones. Here he remained three years, rapidly rising in celebrity and favour,

being justly regarded as the hero of the Dublin stage, and the Roscius of Scotland.

The state of the internal policy and economy of Covent-garden theatre, rendering it indispensably necessary to secure a powerful accession of talents, in the event of certain contingencies then undecided, the proprietor very naturally directed his inquiring eye to our hero, whose growing reputation and acknowledged excellence pointed him out as the fittest person to counterbalance the weight of popular talent at the other house; as well as to supply the loss which might possibly accrue from any defection then apprehended in his own corps. Offers were accordingly made to Mr. Cooke, of too tempting and persuasive a nature to be easily resisted; and thus the town is indebted to Mr. Harris for the acquisition of an actor, who ranks among the brightest ornaments of the profession.

In consequence of this arrangement, Mr. Cooke made his *debut* on the boards of Covent-garden theatre, October 31, 1800, in the part of Richard, in *King Richard the Third*. The busy tongue of rumour had blazoned his fame far and wide, and wound up public expectation to its highest pitch.

Seldom has a first appearance excited such a strong degree of interest and curiosity, and perhaps, still more seldom has a first appearance been crowned with such distinguished *eclat* and success. As a proof of the transcendent powers of the actor, we need only observe, that within the space of four months, Mr. Cooke repeated the character no less than fifteen times, and each time to full and overflowing houses.

To launch into a regular and systematic review of the merit of Mr. Cooke's performance, in the

several characters he has sustained, since his first appearance on the metropolitan boards, would carry us infinitely beyond the limits to which our present disquisitions are necessarily confined. We are, therefore, reluctantly compelled to content ourselves with little more than a bare enumeration. Four days after his first appearance, he played Shylock, in the Merchant of Venice, which also assisted to keep up the reputation he had so deservedly acquired in Richard the Third. November 14, he appeared in the whimsical character of Sir Archy Macsarcasm, in Macklin's farce of Love-a-la-Mode, a character which, till Mr. Cooke's performance, has never found an adequate representative, since the secession of the author from his professional functions. Iago, in the Moor of Venice, was his next essay, November 28. December 5, he acted the hero in Macbeth; and on the 17th of that month, came out in Kiteley, in Ben Jonson's Every Man in his Humour. To this list he has since added the part of the Stranger, in the drama of that name, which he performed for his own benefit, Jan. 27, 1801.

Great as is the merit of Mr. Cooke's acting, and unbounded the applause awarded him by the uncommon suffrage of the town, we think that his powers have not yet been adequately called forth, nor exerted in their proper sphere. Formed with a cast of features peculiarly adapted for the sarcastic, his performance of Sir Archy, in Love-a-la-Mode, and Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, in the Man of the World, afford a most convincing and incontestable proof, that this is the line in which he is qualified to excel; beyond rivalship or competition. Even that harshness of tone into which he occasionally falls;

cannot to be repugnant in characters of this description.

In person, Mr. Cooke is of middle stature, rather stout, or, to speak with greater precision, of broad proportions. His features are strongly drawn, and capable of the most varied and contrasted inflexion. It is in the command of those and the forcible expression of his eye, that his superior excellence in a great measure consists. With less gesticulation, and less mechanical trickery, than, perhaps, any other actor on the stage, he draws a bold, decisive outline, and makes a deep impression on the mind. That he is deficient in point of grace and laboured refinement, we readily allow; but if it be admitted as an axiom in taste, that the fewest touches give the strongest and the most correct likeness, in preference to the painter who multiplies his strokes, and works *in detail*. In soliloquies, he is eminently conspicuous. He does not, after the example of the major part of the profession, cross and flounce about the stage; but, conscious of the impropriety of *addressing a soliloquy* to the audience, delivers it, as it *ought* to be delivered, as a kind of self-conference, in which a man may be said to be communing with his own soul.

CRAWFORD, Mr.—Was bred an attorney, and afterwards became a barrister; but soon declined the profession of the law for the stage, and made his first appearance on the London boards; but not meeting with success, he repaired to Dublin, and having married the widow of the famous Barry, for the sake of his wife he was engaged by Mr. Ryder. He soon left the theatre, on account of a piece of economy which he

practised on his benefit night, that provoked the indignation of both the performers and the audience. The farce was *High Life below Stairs*, and instead of a supper, he provided *wooden* fowls, and other mock dishes. Mr. G. Dawson, who played one of the servants, finding the fowl so very *tough* that he could not possibly carve it, showed it to the audience, who immediately expressed their contempt. The supper was kicked about, and the curtain fell. Notwithstanding Mr. Ryder, on this occasion, was very satirical on Mr. Crawford, yet soon after the latter not only returned to his theatre, but became a partner in the management of it. Such was, however, its distracted state, that Mr. Ryder left it all to himself, and went over to Mr. Daly, while Mr. Crawford supported it as long as he could. His wife, however, would never appear on the stage till she was paid; and her husband was frequently obliged to collect the money from the door-keepers, and send her the sum she demanded. The band likewise mutinied, and the poor manager, one night that he was to perform *Othello*, there being no musicians in the orchestra, offered to play on the violin himself between the acts, which proposal being cheerfully accepted by the audience, he played that night the double part of *Moor* and *Fiddler*, and his performance in the orchestra was more applauded than that on the stage. This distracted state of the theatre soon obliged him to throw up the management; and a separation afterwards took place between him and his wife. This gentleman had a most unfortunate Newcastle *burr* in his throat, but was totally unconscious of it himself; otherwise his address to Banquo's ghost

would have cured him of his passion for Macbeth. He was encored in "Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear," &c. which he took for applause, and very obligingly repeated it to a quizzing Dublin audience.

CRAWFORD, Mrs.—This celebrated actress was born at Bath; she was the daughter of an eminent apothecary in that town, who preferring temporary gratifications to the future prospects of his family, gave into all the expences of that fashionable place; so that though his profession was extensive, it was, at least, balanced by his expences. This lady, from her childhood, amidst many promising qualifications, expressed a warm preference for theatrical amusements, which, joined to a figure pleasingly feminine, great natural sweetness of temper, and the fashionable station she filled, made her, as she grew up, an object of general attraction. When she was about seventeen years of age, she was particularly noticed by a young gentleman of very extensive fortune, and the brother of a noble lord, who was then at Bath. From seeing her only in the rooms, he was so struck with her manner, that he contrived to drink tea with her at a third person's house. Here her conversation established what her exterior charms had begun; and after a few visits to the house, he formally asked permission of the father to become his son-in-law. So advantageous an offer was readily embraced by all parties: the parent was flattered with the idea of noble connexions—the daughter with possessing the object of her affections.

Whilst things were in this train of maturation, an unexpected letter arrived, advising the

lover of the death of an uncle in London, which required his immediate attendance. He unwillingly obeyed, after having pledged his affections for his instant return. But the air of London soon dissipated his vows, whilst the amiable object of them, after waiting two months in expectation of hearing from him, had nothing but sighs and painful recollections to comfort her. The chagrin she was thrown into on this account, so visibly impaired her health, that it was thought advisable by her physicians, to order a change of air. A near relation in Yorkshire made an offer of his house, which was accepted; and, as people usually run from one extreme to another, she entered at first with fictitious vivacity into every species of amusement, but by degrees, she caught the sprightliness of the place, and perfectly recovered her spirits. Amongst the amusements of the country, the play-house, which was only distant a few miles from where she resided, was not overlooked. She afterwards returned to Bath, where she married Mr. Dancer; but as her relations would not suffer her to indulge her theatrical passion in that city, she went in the summer to Portsmouth. The following winter they went to York, solicited an engagement, and obtained it. She was the favourite actress there until September, 1758, when they turned their thoughts on Ireland. Mr. Barry and Mr. Woodward having at that time opened Crowstreet theatre, they readily got admittance at good salaries. Mrs. Dancer had played in York before several genteel audiences, and it was then thought, by the best judges about that country, that she would one day turn out a great acqui-

tion to the stage. Her first appearance in Dublin confirmed this opinion, and she every night shewed, that nothing but the want of experience was against her.

There was a dancer on the Dublin stage, who, from the intimacy he had with our heroine and her husband, proposed taking an excursion into the country with the former, and another lady, for a few days, to which the husband consented. She had been absent but two days, when it was surmised to the husband, by some malicious person, that they went off together. Finding his honour so closely concerned, he instantly pursued them, and at a little village, about twenty miles from town, got intelligence that they were at the principal inn. Here he lost sight of his prudence, and rushing into the house, demanded his wife, who, with the other lady and gentleman, was drinking tea in the dining-room; and alarmed at his threats, threw herself for protection on the gentleman, who, imprudently, locked her up with himself in a bed-chamber adjoining. The husband assailed the door, and threatened destruction to the parties, whilst the other as resolutely defended the pass. However, the door was at length broke open, but whether from seeing the partner of his heart in distress, or the fears of meeting the contents of a pistol, which his antagonist held in opposition to his, he quietly conducted her out of the room, placed her in a post-chaise, and drove to town. This anecdote fed, for a while, half the tea-tables about the capital with scandal. All the little caricature painters were set to work, and every newspaper produced a fresh pun or epigram. On the night after her

arrival in town, she played Sylvia, in the Recruiting Officer. Her husband's allusion to her on her appearance is, "Welcome to town, cousin Sylvia." The audience instantly found out the allusion, and bestowed on it all that applause usually given on these occasions. Soon after this event, her husband died, and left her in the possession of every thing out of the way. She had youth, beauty, and great theatrical merit: nor were the gallant world insensible of them. She had many amorous tenders; amongst the rest, one from a Right Honourable Earl, who offered her a *carte blanche*; but these offers were rejected with contempt. The Irish Roscius (Mr. Barry) had secured her heart; and, like a second Stella, she sucked in the poison of love by the vehicle of tuition. From this period we find her rising to the top of her profession. Her proximity to the manager secured her all the capital parts; besides, she received such instructions from him in private rehearsals, that in a little time she added all his fire to her own softness.

Mr. Barry, in the year 1766, finding the management of the Irish theatres not turning out to his expectation, lett them on very advantageous terms to Mr. Mossop, and set out for London, where he had a summer engagement with Mr. Foote, at the Hay-market.

Othello, a part almost forgotten since Quin's time, was now much wished for by the public. Mr. Garrick, it is true, had played it twice, but whether from not liking the part, or not being willing to risk an already secured reputation, he had for many years declined it. Mr. Barry's appearance therefore, in this character, drew crowded au-

diences; and whilst the critics allowed him all due praise, Mrs. Barry, in Desdemona (a part, previously to her playing it, considered as trifling), was received with equal applause: but when she afterwards appeared in Belvidera, Rutland, Monimia, &c. in tragedy; in Lady Townly, Beatrice, and Rosalind, in comedy; her theatrical character rose superior to criticism—it claimed admiration. During this season our English Roscius saw her. Mr. Barry was formerly his antagonist in the tented field; therefore he knew the full extent of his powers: but Mrs. Barry was a novelty, and such a one as this sagacious manager thought could not be purchased too dearly. He therefore engaged them at Drury-lane, where, during the course of three seasons, Mrs. Barry gave such repeated proofs of her excellent performance, as indubitably ranked her the first actress on the English, perhaps, on the European stage. Her first appearance, after the death of her husband, was in Lady Randolph, when she spoke an occasional address, said to be written by Mr. Garrick.

On her third marriage with Mr. Crawford, she performed in Dublin; but frequently with such indifference, that she could only be said to have *walked through her character*; but on Mrs. Siddons's engagement at a rival theatre, she was awakened by emulation, and played Belvidera, Isabella, &c. against that lady. The critics were divided in their opinion; but it was generally thought, that though probably inferior to Mrs. Siddons in the terrific, she was superior in the pathetic. Her last appearance in London was at Covent-garden, in 1797, but time, alas! had destroyed those powers with

which we were once delighted. She died in 1801.

DAVENPORT, Mr.—Has been on the stage for many years; and assisted Mr. Daly the first season of his management in Dublin. In 1795, he and his wife received an engagement at Covent-garden, from the recommendation of Mr. Munden, who entertained a favourable opinion of Mrs. Davenport's talents, when he was performing with her in Ireland. Utility, rather than bright and shining talents, constitutes the characteristic of this performer. In whatever part he appears, he always makes good his claim to the merit of being correct, and to adopt a favourite expression of his own, when he has occasionally met with less applause from the audience than he conceived himself entitled to—"What would the people have? always clean! always perfect!—shirt washed to-day, and wig combed not an hour ago!"

The characters in which he acquits himself with the greatest success, are those of a dry and caustic nature. His Sulky, in the Road to Ruin, may justly be classed among his happiest performances. Nor ought we to withhold the merit of praise from his clowns and rustics. But when he has the misfortune to have "greatness thrust upon him," and appears as the representative of a king, a doge, a duke, or a lord, the only recommendation we can then confer upon his acting, is the plea advanced by himself—"always clean, at least! always perfect."

DAVENPORT, Mrs.—Is wife to the above: in her line of character she has not her superior on the London stage. Her Mrs. Moral, in the

Birth Day ; Lady Duberly, in the Heir at Law ; Dame Ashfield, in Speed the Plough ; Widow Warren, in the Road to Ruin ; Widow Cheshire, in the Agreeable Surprise ; Mrs. Pickle, in the Spoiled Child ; with a long and diversified list of parts of a similar description, deservedly rank her high in the scale of histrionic excellence. And what greatly enhances her value, she is not less to be prized for the *generality* than for the intrinsic merit of her performances. Wide and extensive as is the range of parts which she sustains, there is not a single character in the whole list in which she does not acquit herself with distinguished talent and ability.

DE CAMP, Mr.—This actor is brother to Mrs. C. Kemble : in his boyish days he performed Edward the Fifth, in Prince Arthur, at Drury-lane theatre, after which he went to Edinburgh, and has since played in several other provincial companies. In consideration of his infantine services, and the popularity of his sister, he was engaged at Drury-lane, and made his debut in the part of Vapour, in My Grandmother, Nov. 13, 1800. His youth, and the indulgence of the public, gave sanction to his scenic efforts, and since that period he has sustained several good characters with some little success. He lately married a very amiable and pretty woman, with a handsome property, which enables him to live in a very comfortable style.

D'EGVILLE, JAMES—This highly distinguished ballet-master, is the eldest son of Mr. Peter D'Egville, of French extraction, but born in England. He received professional instructions

from his father, and M. Dauberval of Paris. He married Miss Berry, who belonged to the Opera-house for several years.

In 1795 he was engaged by the proprietors of Drury-lane theatre, for whom he got up a grand pantomime ballet, called Alexander the Great; or, The Conquest of Persia, which met with considerable applause. He also assisted in the procession, &c. of Pizarro. He left Drury-lane for a few seasons, and gave his services at the Opera-house, where his ballets were successful. Since his return to Drury-lane theatre he has brought out The Forty Thieves, and various other spectacles of deserved celebrity.

DENMAN, Mr.—This comedian was the son of an officer in the Royal Navy, and was originally intended for the same service, but by the wish of his mother, it was decided that one of the family should be engaged in some profession or trade on land, as two of his brothers were already Lieutenants in the Navy: accordingly he was placed with an eminent bookseller in the city of Rochester. At the expiration of his time he repaired to London, for improvement in the art and mystery of buying and selling books; but having long contemplated the stage as the profession which of all others would yield him most delight, he quitted the shop for the more exalted employment of personating heroes, lords, dukes, and even majesty itself.

His first essay was at Kingston, in Surrey; and having been noticed by the manager, for some propriety in what is technically called *level speaking*, he soon thought fit to represent the “buried majesty of Denmark;” but another performer claiming the character as his right, Mr. Denman

was obliged to take the part of the *living king*, and give up the ghost: indeed this had nearly happened in reality; for the manager, who played Hamlet, using a sword instead of a stage foil, at the moment he was rushing with his accustomed warmth of vengeance to stab the guilty king, forgot that he held a real sword in his hand; but fortunately for the subject of these memoirs, he just discovered his anger in time to prevent it; so forgetting the dignity of his assumed rank and situation, he sprang from his chair, exclaiming with the greatest quickness and terror, "it's a sword!" Hamlet instantly checked himself; King Claudius *died* without being *killed*, and the tragedy ended in the highest style of merriment.

In the season of 1796-7, Mr. Denman was engaged by Mr. Grubb, for Drury-lane. His first appearance was in *Foigard, Beaux Stratagem*, Oct. 27, 1796. The cause of his engagement was chiefly on account of a new piece, called "The Charity Boy," which had been announced for representation at the Haymarket theatre, but transferred to Drury-lane, on account of Mr. Johnstone's then indisposition. The condemnation of this musical entertainment, in which Mr. Denman performed the character intended for Mr. Johnstone, rendered his stay in London but for one season.

He then went to Edinburgh for a year; from thence he returned to England, and engaged with the late Mr. Wilkinson at York, with whom he continued till the beginning of the season 1803, when Mr. Colman, having on a visit to York, seen him act, and heard him sing, made him a liberal offer for the Haymarket, which he thought prudent to accept. On the Hay-market boards he generally assumed

the line of characters in which Mr. John Johnstone is so much at home in his personification. Yet Mr. Denman had a great share of merit in Irish characters, and played old men and guardians with becoming propriety. He was very attentive to his profession, and useful to the theatre. He died at Portsmouth, in October 1806.

While in the York company he wrote his life, in which is involved a great collection of whimsical anecdotes of performers, and strange occurrences that have taken place on the stage. We understand his widow intends to publish it for the benefit of herself and an unprotected child. It is said that it contains a great share of literary merit, and will no doubt be in much request.

Denman was himself very fond of relating anecdotes he had collected during his professional career. Among the great number he told, we insert the following instance of the force of habit in a fondness for a joke: Mr. Masterman, the manager of a theatre in Wales, had lost a favourite child; it was his wish that the whole of his company should attend the funeral: on setting out, one of the performers, a low comedian, asked the inconsolable father in what *order or form* they were to walk? Masterman, with his usual proneness to jocularities, gravely replied, "the tragedy people first, if you please; and tell the comedy folks to *weep*, and be d—ned to them, or the funeral will be *performed* without any tragic effect, and that won't be *theatrical*, you know!"

Stammering.—A gentleman conceiving himself in possession of great theatrical genius and abilities, chose the part of Richmond, in Shakspeare's tragedy of Richard III. for his *debut*. From

a natural defect in his utterance, the delivery of his first line produced an effect which at once convinced him of his error, and he retired without proceeding in the character. He spoke the line as follows: "Thus f-f-far have w-w-we march'd int-t-to the b-bowels of the l-l-land w-without *Impediment!*"

Perversion of an Author's meaning.—Mistakes of this kind are more frequently made from a want of sufficient time and attention in securely studying the words of a character, than from a real deficiency of talent. In *Spced the Plough*, Sir Abel Handy says, that he has obtained a patent for converting "*saw-dust* into *deal boards*;" but the present Portsmouth manager, in performing that character, boasted that he had obtained a patent for converting *deal boards* into *saw-dust*.

Curious Coincidence.—A Mr. Campbell, who was a season at Covent-garden theatre about twelve years since, happened inadvertently to be out of the way when he should have been on the stage, to have begun the second act of *Alexander the Great*. It was so long before he could be found, that the audience had become very clamorous: on his entrance, he was received with hissings and hootings, particularly from the *galleries*; when silence was at length obtained, his first line ran thus: "Why all this noise? ye partial Gods declare."

Tate Wilkinson.—Wilkinson was often in a repartee. An actor in the York theatre, of very slender talent, but possessing a great portion of conceit, having played all the first rate characters in very small companies, expostulated with Mr. Wilkinson for giving him some very inferior parts, and used language highly

unbecoming; he frequently made use of the phrase, "I who am at the top of the ladder,"—"Well," replied Mr. Wilkinson, "I'll end your troubles, for if you are at the *top* of the *ladder*, I'll *turn you off* directly."

DERBY COUNTESS OF—Mr. Farren, the father of this distinguished lady, served a regular apprenticeship to a surgeon and apothecary at Cork; and his brother rose by his merit, to the rank of Captain in the 64th regiment of foot. This Gentleman was a scholar and an author, and wrote an essay on Taste, which was put in the hands of Dr. Hawkesworth, and met with his approbation, but we believe it was never published. The father of Miss Farren, after he was out of his time, set up in business for himself at Cork, but though he was generally respected, and married the daughter of Mr. Wright, an eminent brewer at Liverpool, with whom he had some fortune, his practice failed, and at length he became insolvent. It must not be concealed, that his conduct in some respects proved the source of his misfortunes, for he was fond of company, without being select in his choice, and loved the tavern better than his shop. He had always been partial to theatrical amusements, and greatly delighted in associating with the children of Thespis in his native city. After his retirement to Liverpool therefore, and finding that his father-in-law's circumstances were not adequate to his expectations, he boldly resolved upon venturing into the dramatic line. His irregular habits however continued, and had it not been for the exertions of Mrs. Farren, and the assistance which she received from her friends, the situation of herself and her children

must have been wretched in the extreme. She brought him seven children, of whom only one is now living, Elizabeth, the subject of this article. The Countess was born in 1759, and lost her father when she was very young. In 1773, she made her first appearance on the Liverpool stage, in the character of Rosetta, in the comic opera of *Love in a Village*. That theatre was then under the management of Mr. Younger, a dramatic veteran, and still remembered in that part of the kingdom with respect, for his pleasantness and liberality: he took Miss Farren under his own immediate protection, became her tutor, and watched over her with a truly parental solicitude. Under such a guardian and preceptor, aided by a quickness of perception and a ductile disposition, she soon became a promising actress, and the favourite of the public, not only at Liverpool, but Shrewsbury, Chester, and other places where the corps of Mr. Younger usually performed.

At length that worthy man, who had always a lively concern in her welfare and advancement, recommended her to try her fortune in London; accordingly she came to town in the summer of 1777, with a letter from Mr. Younger to the elder Colman, at whose theatre she appeared shortly after in the character of Miss Hardcastle, in *She Stoops to Conquer*. That excellent actor, Edwin, made his first appearance the same night, in the character of Tony Lumpkin; and the same season produced also that eminent genius, the late Mr. Henderson—a trio of performers seldom exhibited together.

She repeated the part of Rosetta in London with considerable applause; and after much entreaty, was prevailed upon by Mr. Parsons, to undertake for his benefit, the part of Lady

Townly, in the Provok'd Husband, which she had for some time declined through diffidence. So great was her success in this character, that she was engaged at *both* the winter theatres successively, and performed at Drury-lane and Covent-garden, in both tragedy and comedy. Having now completely established her theatrical fame, she succeeded Mrs. Abington in her chief characters at Drury-lane, and displayed all that elegance, ease, and fashion, for which her predecessor had been so famed. Though she had supported many tragic parts with Mr. Digges at Covent-garden, and represented Juliet, in 'The Fair Circassian, &c. at Drury-lane with merited applause, she now confined her extensive abilities to the comic line, but occasionally performed serious characters in comedy, viz. in 'The English Merchant, Conscious Lovers, Chapter of Accidents, &c. with approbation. Her *elegant* representation of Lady Teazle, is still remembered with delight. Having left the Haymarket theatre, she paid a summer visit to Dublin, and her performances there were received with universal approbation. At this time she was noticed by the most distinguished characters, and at the particular request of several of the nobility, had conducted the stage business of a private play, which was performed at the Duke of Richmond's house in Privy Gardens, and in which Lord Derby, Lord Henry Fitzgerald, and the Hon. Mrs. Damer performed. Her private worth as well as *public* merit had long attracted the admiration of Lord Derby. Though neither his Lordship nor Miss Farren were scrupulous to conceal their particular intimacy, they were cautious in the management of it, to give the world no room for censorious

remark; and it is observable, that in all their interviews Mrs. Farren, who always resided with her daughter, was present in every step of their advancement.

The following testimonies of Lord Derby's affectionate esteem, are too honourable to both persons, to be omitted.

TO MR. HUMPHREYS, THE MINIATURE PAINTER,
ON HIS PORTRAIT OF MISS FARREN.

O Thou, whose pencil all the graces guide,
Whom beauty, conscious of her fading bloom,
So oft implores, alas! with harmless pride,
To snatch the transient treasure from the tomb!

Pleas'd, I behold the fair whose comic art
Th' unwearied eye of taste and judgment draws;
Who charms with nature's elegance the heart,
And claims the loudest thunder of applause.

Such, such, should prompt thy pencil's toil;
Of serving folly give thy labour o'er;
Fools never will be wanting to our isle,—
Perhaps a Farren may appear no more.

TO MISS FARREN, ON HER BEING ABSENT
FROM CHURCH.

While wond'ring angels, as they look'd from high,
Observ'd thine absence with an holy sigh,
To them a bright exalted Seraph said,—
"Blame not the conduct of th' exalted maid;
Where'er she goes her steps can never stray,
RELIGION walks companion of her way:
She goes with every virtuous thought imprest,
Heaven on her face, and heaven within her breast."

At length, on the death of the late Countess of Derby, the way was clear to the perfection of that happiness which his Lordship had so long anticipated.

Miss Farren took her farewell of the public, at Drury-lane, on the 7th of April, 1797, in the character of Lady Teazle, in the *School for Scandal*; on which occasion, the house literally overflowed.

Towards the conclusion of the play, she appeared to be much affected, and when Mr. Wroughton came forward, to speak some lines which were written on the occasion, her emotions increased to such a degree, that she was under the necessity of receiving support from Mr. King.

The fall of the curtain was attended with repeated bursts of applause, not unmingled with feelings of regret, for the loss of an actress then in the zenith of her charms, and while her dramatic reputation was in the highest esteem of the public.

On the 8th of May following, she was married to Lord Derby by special license, at his Lordship's house in Grosvenor-square. Soon after, her ladyship was introduced at court, and made one in the procession at the marriage of the Princess Royal to the Duke of Wirtemberg. Since that time, this noble pair have spent much of their time at their seat in the country, where her Ladyship is considered as a blessing by the tenants and the poor.

DIGNUM, Mr.—Is the son of a late respectable tailor in Wild-street, Lincoln's-inn Fields. At a very early age he was sent to a Catholic school, where he began the necessary education for a priest. In the sixth year of his age, he was found to possess a good voice, in consequence of which he was chosen one of the singing-boys at the King of Sardinia's chapel, Duke-street, in the above neighbourhood. His first vocal effort was the beautiful Portuguese hymn, called *Adeste Fideles*, in which he evinced exquisite taste, and great powers of execution. This performance gained him the approbation of the

frequenters of the chapel, among whom were two musical gentlemen, of the name of Webbe and Danby, who favoured our hero with lessons in his favourite science; the cultivation of which became the sole object of his contemplation till he arrived at the age of twelve, when his father withdrew him from his devotions to Apollo, for the more mechanical avocation of a carver and gilder, in the shop of Mr. Seddons, of Aldersgate-street. Six months had scarcely elapsed, before old Dignum felt dissatisfied with his son's employment, and immediately removed him from Seddons' shop to his own work-board. In this situation he continued till the late Mr. Linley, one of the patentees of Drury-lane theatre, took him under his protection as a pupil for seven years. To this gentleman Mr. Dignum is indebted for his present knowledge of music, and his scholastic acquirements. At the age of eighteen, and on the 17th of October, 1784, he made his first appearance at Drury-lane theatre, as the representative of Young Meadows, in *Love in a Village*. The same evening Mr. Holman made his *debut* on the Covent-garden boards, which occasioned the facetious Charles Bannister to observe, "that there was Hol-man at one house, and the button-hole-man at the other." Mr. Dignum's success insured him the possession of the first line of vocal characters, until Mr. Kelly came to the theatre, to whom he surrendered them; and on Mr. Charles Bannister leaving the house, he sustained his cast of parts, which were more suitable to his figure; and which he continues to hold with public approbation. Dignum, like most English singers, will never immortalize himself by his acting; but as a mere

singer he is entitled to our praise. His voice possesses much sweetness; and when heard in a room, is more effective than on the stage. A few years ago he published a volume of Melodes of his own composing, by subscription, which he dedicated to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and which is honoured with the signature of almost every nobleman and distinguished personage in the united kingdom. He married the daughter of Charles Kennett, Esq. of the Temple, with whom he received a handsome fortune. This lady died about seven years ago, and left a daughter, whose personal charms and accomplishments are highly spoken of.

Dodd, Mr.—It is said that this much-esteemed comedian was brought up a hair-dresser, and early in life without any education. Another report is, that he was put to a grammar school in Holborn; and having performed Darius in Terence's *Andrea*, whilst at school, he entertained a passion for the stage, and commenced actor at the early age of sixteen, at Sheffield, where he made his first appearance in *Roderigo*, in *Othello*; after which he undertook principal characters in tragedy with great success. He then went to Norwich, where he chiefly exhibited in comedy, with flattering applause, but was still a servant to *Melpomene*, till being engaged at Bath, he devoted his study entirely to the Comic Muse, with so much reputation, that he received a liberal proposal from the then managers of Drury-lane, Messrs. Garrick and Lacy, which he accepted, and made his first appearance in London, in 1765, in *Faddle*, in the *Foundling*, with success adequate to his own and the managers' most sanguine wishes. He

established himself in many characters, particularly in genteel fops, in which line he stood unrivalled. About 1784, he formed a connexion with Mrs. Bulkeley, afterwards Mrs. Beresford, which continued for some time; but suspecting her fidelity, a separation ensued. He died in September 1796.

DOWTON, Mr.--Is the son of Mr. William Dowton, formerly an inn-keeper at Exeter, and still a resident of that city. Our hero was born in the year 1766, and as soon as his tender years would admit of his separation from maternal care, he was sent to one of the best seminaries in the neighbourhood, where he continued till he reached the age of sixteen, and was then articled to an architect. During his apprenticeship he became a votary to the Thespian art, and occasionally performed at a private theatre, established by the young men of Exeter. The part which ushered him into theatrical notice, was Carlos, in the tragedy of the Revenge; and on the same evening, little Davy, the composer and fiddler, now of Covent-garden theatre, personated Zanga. Jackson, the celebrated composer, attended on this occasion, and gave his musical aid to the diversion of the night. The applause of a crowded house having accompanied our hero's first efforts, every succeeding day increased his enthusiasm for the stage, while the duties of his master's office as rapidly became irksome and unpleasant. Before he had served one year of his article, he bade adieu to domestic comforts, and joined a company of strollers at Ashburton, in Devonshire, where he made his *debut*, in his favourite Carlos. So eager was he to appear on the stage,

that he gave a new coat off his back to a brother Thespian, for permission to play the character of Beaufort, in the Citizen.

In this situation he continued for a considerable time, and suffered the usual difficulties attendant on a stroller's life. Being, however, nearly starved, reason resumed her seat, and he and a fellow sufferer made up their minds to forsake the Muses, who they thought had forsaken them, and return to their respective homes. Mr. Dowton and his itinerant companion, had not long arrived at his father's inn, and partaken of all the comforts a parental roof could afford, before he and his associate forgot their former miseries, and formed a resolution once more to court fame and public favour, however dearly they might purchase them. After much experience in theatrical misfortune, Mr. Dowton was engaged by Mr. Hughes, the manager of the Weymouth theatre. From this place he returned to his native town, and performed Romeo, Macbeth, and all the first characters in tragedy; he afterwards joined Mrs. Baker's company in Kent, and married her daughter, by whom he has had two children.

There is a circumstance attending Mr. Dowton's engagement in London, which has been greatly mistaken in publications relative to the stage; namely, that Mr. Cumberland had recommended him to the notice of the proprietors of Drury-lane theatre; but the fact is simply this: Mr. Dowton hearing that Mr. Elliston had repeatedly convened great houses to his representation of Sheva, in the comedy of the Jew, wrote to Mr. Wroughton, then acting manager of Drury-lane theatre, and signified a desire to perform the above part in London;

observing, that if Mr. Wroughton wished to make any inquiry with respect to his talents as an actor, he took the liberty to mention Mr. Cumberland, to whom he was no stranger. Mr. Wroughton returned a favourable answer, and Mr. Dowton came immediately to town, accompanied by Mr. Cumberland, who returned with our hero to Tunbridge Wells, the day after the successful *entré* which occasioned his engagement at Drury-lane theatre. But previous to this gentleman's engagement in London, Mr. Dimond, of Bath, Mr. Colman, and Mr. Harris, had made overtures to him to join their respective corps; and one of these offers would have been accepted by Mr. Dowton, had not the above sudden engagement taken place at Drury-lane. We never recollect a first appearance greeted with greater approbation than what accompanied his representation of Sheva, from the masterly and truly delicate manner in which he illustrated the feelings of the old Jew. In portraying the Israelite, he never betrayed the imitator, but evinced the real passions of the man, governed by the impressions to which the business of the comedy gave birth; added to which, he was not, as we have seen the representatives of Jews, sometimes Frenchmen, sometimes Englishmen, and often Welchmen; but he strictly adhered to the dialect of the part, so that the audience never once lost sight of the real personage; his personification of the descendant of Abraham, may be justly ranked as an unique piece of acting.

The history of the stage and the biography of the performers shew, that at one time the appellation of great actor was given to a person who had only been successful in a few cha-

acters: and except in two or three parts, the performers have been useless lumber to the theatre. But no man on the stage is more useful to a manager than Mr. Dowton; he can personify a versatility of characters, and delight in all. Mr. King, whose talents must ever be remembered with the most pleasing reflection, found him to be an able substitute in most of his difficult characters, and the beauties King gave his author, have been found to accompany Mr. Dowton's descriptive powers, in many of those parts that once distinguished the above comic veteran. Among the various characters which have fallen to his care, Sir Hugh Evans, in Shakspeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, is one in which he is superlatively great, in giving the text the utmost chastity of delivery, with a spirit and richness of colouring that renders it delightfully whimsical, particularly in the third act, where Sir Hugh meets the French Doctor, agreeable to the challenge he sent him; and what adds to the beauty of his effort is, we never see the Welchman sink into the actor, and thereby discover the deception: through every scene Dowton maintains the Ancient Briton with all the characteristic oddity of his nature.

To contrast the above, we mention him as the representative of Hardcastle, in the comedy of *She Stoops to Conquer*; and if he had been seen in this part by the author, Dr. Goldsmith, he would, we doubt not, have had the honour of the Poet's eulogium. He also makes an excellent countryman: if we recollect rightly, the part of Clod, in the *Young Quaker*, was rendered very conspicuous by Edwin: a few seasons ago we saw Mr. Dowton delineate the rustic, and if it be not presumptive to say so, the

audience did not seem to miss the deceased comedian: we candidly think he coloured the author's jokes in the highest vein of comedy. The character of Malvolio, in *Twelfth Night*, requires an actor of very discriminating powers, to enter into all its niceties, and to give the beauties of the author with a richness of description, yet preserve his portrait free from an extravagance of colouring. Mr. Dowton may be considered as chaste a painter of the love-sick steward as ever trod the stage. Russet, in the *Jealous Wife*, and Sir Anthony Absolute, in *The Rivals*, are parts in which he equally shines as a comedian of the first-rate talents.

Among the many characters that this gentleman has successfully personified in our metropolitan theatre, no one deserves more eulogium than his Governor Heartall, in Cherry's comedy of *The Soldier's Daughter*; the Author has drawn him with a great versatility of feeling, in which the passions repeatedly suffer sudden transition from joy to anger, with all that variety of manner and expression peculiar to an odd tempered old man. In displaying the feelings of this character, Dowton exceeds all possible description: there is a natural richness of humour preserved by him, that never borders on improbable buffoonery; indeed, it is so perfect a piece of acting, that while it is remembered it must continue to be admired.

DUNCAN, Miss—Is the daughter of theatrical parents, who acquired some celebrity in the theatres of Liverpool, Newcastle, and Dublin. When an infant she made a favourable *debut* at Newcastle, in the character of the Duke of York, which she performed to the Richard of Mr.

Cooke, now of Covent-garden theatre. Her second appearance was in *Tom Thumb*, which she sustained with equal success. On Mr. and Mrs. Duncan's being engaged at the Dublin theatre, they availed themselves of her youthful services at their annual benefits; and at the age of thirteen, she acted *Rosetta*, in the opera of *Love in a Village*, with every promise of that excellence which she has since so fully realized. While in the occasional exercise of her juvenile powers in the profession of an actress, Miss Farnen, now Countess of Derby, repeatedly noticed our heroine in the most flattering terms of praise and encouragement, and distinguished her by the title of "*The Little Wonder*," who in a few years she hoped to see on the London boards, taking the lead in genteel comedy; and this hope the Countess of Derby has lived to see accomplished.

The late Tate Wilkinson, of York, having heard favourably of her figure and talents, gave her an engagement, and ushered her into public notice in the character of *Sophia*, in the *Road to Ruin*, and *Gillian*, in the *Quaker*; in both of these parts she displayed traits of extraordinary talents which are seldom found to accompany an actress so young as she then was. Her essay was so highly satisfactory to the York manager, that he immediately raised her salary, and gave her possession of the first walk of characters in genteel comedy.

Talents of the very first description will not avail much to render a performer great in the histrionic art, unless they are accompanied by laborious study and perseverance: in this particular Miss Duncan was not unmindful, and united the liberal gifts of nature with in-

defatigable industry, which soon raised her to distinguished eminence in her profession. She afterwards engaged with Messrs. Aickin and Jackson, for Edinburgh and Glasgow, where she played under the fostering care of the generous Caledonians, whose patronage rapidly advanced her in professional respectability and public esteem. In the summer of 1804 she performed a month at Margate, amidst an abundance of admirers, among whom was Mr. Graham, who on seeing her play the Widow Cheerly, deputed Mr. Wroughton to offer her such terms as her merits deserved. An article was immediately entered into between the parties, and Miss Duncan appeared for the first time before a London audience in the part of Lady Teazle, and was received with great and just marks of public approbation. She repeated her representation of the character fifteen nights, and as she became familiar with the audience, her colouring of the scenic portrait was more easy, expressive, and rich. Since her union with the Drury-lane corps, she has performed a wide range of characters of a very opposite feature, which shew that greatness accompanies the versatility of her powers.

In comedy, opera, and farce, Miss Duncan will interest and delight: this arises from the many accomplishments that adorn the mind and person of this lady; with a voice extremely sweet and powerful, she unites a perfect knowledge of music; with a person finely formed and graceful, she is a most excellent dancer; with the finest sensibility of feeling to deliver the pathos of elegant sentimental comedy, she couples the talent of giving the richest effect to the broad humour of the mimographer.

This lady may fairly be considered of the first consequence to the London stage, and as brilliant talents are embellished by private virtues, she has additional claims to public admiration and esteem.

EDWIN, JOHN—Was born in Clare-street, St. Clement-Danes, August 10, 1749, and being of a sickly constitution, his father was induced to send him at nine years of age to a school in the vicinity of Enfield, where he had not been long, before he gave the most decided indications of his future destiny, by joining some young gentlemen in that neighbourhood, in attempting to perform a play. Private theatricals were not then embellished and attended as they are now; for young Edwin and his associates received their audience in a stable, where the tragedy of Alexander the Great, was chosen for the occasion, and the future comedian *ranted* his part, unaided by any other qualification than what was produced by his puerile presumption. At school, he acquired a perfect knowledge of music, which was afterwards of infinite service to him, in singing his comic songs. He left his seminary at the age of fifteen, at which period he procured a place in the Pension Office of the Exchequer; but that employment requiring no more than two hours daily attendance, he had an opportunity of turning his thoughts to the stage; a propensity to which, seems to have been his ruling passion. Having received information of a spouting club, held at the French Horn, in Wood-street, Cheapside, he became a member, and it was there that the singular humours of Mr. William Woodfall, in the character of Old Musk, *The Musical Lady*, first suggested to Edwin's mind a serious idea of assuming the character of a comedian.

The following summer, he studied the Tankard scene of *Scrub*; the part of Simon, in the first act of *The Apprentice*; and the first scene of *Polydore*, in *The Orphan*, which, with the song of "I followed a lass that was froward and shy," and those of Sir Harry Sycamore, in *The Maid of the Mill*, he concluded might carry him very decently through the winter, at the beginning of which a new spouting society was instituted at the Falcon, in Fetter-lane. There Edwin made his first regular essay, and having passed the fiery ordeal of juvenile criticism amid the applauses of the members, was soon after chosen one of the six managers.

He was always a great admirer of the professional merits of the famous Ned Shuter, who in return, entertained a high opinion of his comic abilities, and used frequently to say, "My boy, you will be an excellent actor when I am laid low!" Indeed, it was to his imitation of that actor's songs, and the performance at the above-mentioned club of some of his parts, that he was first indebted to the patronage of Mr. Lee, of Drury-lane theatre, who seeing his *Launcelot*, in *The Merchant of Venice*, engaged him for the ensuing summer at Manchester, at a settled salary of One Guinea a week, and the profits of half a benefit. However, before he joined this theatrical corps, a circumstance occurred which might have been productive of great advantage to him: Mr. John Edwin, of George-street, Hanover-square, a distant relation possessed of great wealth, died, leaving 50,000*l.* to be distributed in public charities, and appointed twelve trustees to superintend the distribution. Mr. Way, one of his executors, aware of the folly of spending a fortune on objects totally unknown to

him, while his own kinsman was left entirely destitute, from an impulse of justice, made young Edwin secretary to the trust, and annexed a salary of thirty pounds a year, besides some very considerable perquisites, to the appointment. But the stage-struck mind of this young man could be contented with nothing short of theatrical reputation; he accordingly resigned his secretaryship at the end of the year, during which he had accumulated 500*l.* and left his family without the formality of taking leave, but not before he had drawn his money out of the hands of Mr. Way, and presented it to his father, whose circumstances were embarrassed, and whose hopes were disappointed by his resolution to turn player. In 1765, when he was only sixteen years of age, he commenced an actor of *Old Men*, at the Manchester theatre. Justice Woodcock and Sir Harry Sycamore, were two characters which were performed with great applause by our juvenile adventurer; and it is here to be observed, as a circumstance not a little remarkable, that he played old men in his youth, and young men in his more advanced years. His fame was now so firmly established, that before the expiration of the summer, he was engaged at a salary of thirty shillings a week, for the theatre-royal in Smock-alley, Dublin. Accordingly, when the season was over at Manchester he visited London, and having received some money and a watch from his father, he set out for the metropolis of Ireland, where he at length arrived in great distress, having waited so long for a fair wind at Parkgate, that he had been obliged to pawn his watch, and expend his last shilling on the road.

The first character that he performed in Dublin, was that of Sir Philip Modelove, in A

Bold Stroke for a Wife, a part in which much is not expected from the actor. His next was that of Lord Trinket, in the Jealous Wife, and here he had so little of the nobleman in his manner and address, that when exclaiming in the course of his part, "I cut a mighty ridiculous figure here, upon my honour!" some of the wags replied with great vociferation, "You do indeed." His success, however, in Justice Woodcock, in Love in a Village, amply repaid him for his former ill success, and he afterwards continued through the season to attract considerable applause, either as an old man, a thief, a clown, or a constable. After his return from Ireland, he was engaged at several of the provincial theatres in England, and particularly at Bath, where he received very great applause in the character of Periwinkle, in A Bold Stroke for a Wife, and Sir Harry Sycamore, in The Maid of the Mill. There too he first became acquainted with Mrs. Walmsley, then a reputable milliner of that city; his desertion of whom, about twenty years afterwards, occasioned him to be frequently hissed off the stage by a London audience. In June 1775, he was engaged to play at Foote's theatre in the Hay-market, at a salary of three pounds a week, and in the latter part of that month, he made his first professional bow to a London audience, in the part of Flaw, in the manager's comedy of the Cozeners. His success in this attempt did not, however, equal the expectations of his friends, and it was not till he had performed Jobson, in the farce of The Devil to Pay, and Billy Button, in The Maid of Bath, that he acquired any great degree of theatrical reputation; but his fame was not established till Mr. Colman became manager in 1777, when he was brought forward in several new eccentric characters, par-

ticularly in O'Keeffe's pieces, in which the author and actor were mutually served.

In 1779, Mr. Harris engaged Edwin at the rate of seven pounds a week. The first scenic personage he represented at Covent-garden, was Touchstone, in *As You Like It*. Edwin did what he could, but the effort was not entirely satisfactory. He played Midas on the same evening, and in that part recovered all the dignity he had forfeited in Touchstone. The leading design of Mr. Harris, it is said, in engaging Edwin, was to do the part of Punch, in Diödin's pantomime of *Harlequin every Where*, a part to which the composer knew no other individual was competent. His vast comic powers were first generally acknowledged in Master Stephen, in *Every Man in his Humour*. From his fine acting on that night, every thing was presaged by those whose judgment warranted the encomiums of renown. At the conclusion of that season, he made a new engagement with the manager, which was fixed for three years at eight pounds per week. At the expiration of that term it was increased to twelve, and thus it continued until he was called off the great theatre of existence. He died October 31, 1799. He left a son, who became a favourite comedian at Bath, but who died in 1806.

ELLISTON ROBERT WILLIAM—Was born in the parish of Bloomsbury, 1771. His father, a watch-maker of some eminence, resided for many years in Charles-street, Covent-garden; his late uncle was the Rev. Dr. Elliston*,

* In consequence of the death of this gentleman, Mr. Elliston is said to have come into the possession of 15,000*l*.

the much esteemed master of Sidney College, Cambridge; who intended his nephew for the church, and placed him, when nine years old, at St. Paul's school. Having gained some applause in an English Thesis* which he delivered in public in the year 1790, he imbibed an immediate inclination for the stage; and shortly after this effort, performed the part of Pierre, at the Lyceum in the Strand, then occasionally opened as a private theatre. Pursuits of this description naturally produced remonstrance, and finally anger, on the part of those who had pointed out a very different career. His fancy, however, soared beyond the reach of prudence, and he quitted school at the age of sixteen, without the knowledge of his friends; and resolving to try his success on the stage, accompanied a friend to Bath, where he engaged himself as a clerk in a lottery-office, and remained in that capacity a few weeks, till he found an opportunity of making his theatrical essay, which was in the humble character of Tressel, in Richard III.†. Notwithstanding the success of his first efforts, it

* The subject of this Thesis was,

“*Nemo confidat nimium secundis.*”

Trust not prosperity's alluring wreath,
The thorns of adverse fortune lurk beneath.

† Colley Cibber, known only for some years by the name of Master Colley, made his first appearance in an inferior situation. After waiting impatiently for the prompter's notice, he by good fortune obtained the honour of carrying a message on the stage to one of the chief actors of that day, whom he greatly disconcerted. Betterton asked in some anger, who it was that had committed the blunder? Downs, the prompter, replied, “Master Colley.”—“Then forfeit him,” rejoined the other.—“Why, Sir, he has no salary.”—“No! then put him down ten shillings a week, and forfeit him five.” To this good natured adjustment of rewards and punishments, Cibber owed the first money he took in the treasury office.

appears, that he was unfortunate in his desire of procuring an engagement, the company being full, and the manager of a provincial theatre frequently looking with a suspicious eye to the increased expenditure of twenty-five shillings per week.

In consequence, however, of the recommendation of Mr. Wallis (father of the late amiable Miss Wallis, now Mrs. Campbell), he was engaged by Tate Wilkinson at York, where he experienced so much disappointment and vexation, as the principal characters were all in the possession of other performers, that he soon became weary of his condition, and wrote to his uncle a supplicating letter for pardon and indulgence. His application having had the desired effect, he returned to London, and through the medium of Professor Martyn (another of his uncles), and Doctor Farmer, he obtained an interview with the late George Steevens, Esq. the editor of Shakspeare, who introduced him to Mr. Kemble. This gentleman recommended him to study Romeo, against the opening of the present splendid building of Drury-lane; but his patience having been exhausted before the house could open, and his circumstances not being in the most affluent state, he applied to Mr. Diamond, the Bath manager, who was then performing at the Richmond theatre, by whom he was immediately engaged. On his return to Bath, in the year 1793, he made his appearance in the character of Romeo, and found his former efforts had not been forgotten. A number of trifling circumstances, such as the indisposition of performers, &c. afforded a favourable opportunity of calling into action a versatility of powers which was before unknown even to

himself, and soon rendered him a distinguished favourite.

While in the plenitude of his great and almost unprecedented success, the majestic doors of the new theatre, Drury-lane, were opened. Professor Martyn applied for information as to the terms his nephew was likely to procure if he came to town; and was given to understand, that forty, fifty, or sixty shillings per week, on a three years engagement, were as much as could be hazarded on the abilities of a mere novice. This offer was prudently rejected, and Elliston immediately closed with the proposals of the Bath managers, who were anxious to engage him for a certain term.

Among the most successful of Mr Elliston's efforts, may be reckoned his obtaining about this time the hand and heart of a most respectable public character at Bath (Miss Rundall), who was as celebrated for her beauty, as for her skill in unravelling the mysteries of the mazy dance. Mrs. Elliston, now the mother of five children, is elegant in her manners, enjoys the patronage of persons of the first distinction, and at present takes the lead of all competitors in the school of Terpsichore. Thus fortunate in his choice, and happy in domestic life, it is more than probable, that he would have remained content with the laurels the inhabitants of Bath were daily entwining round his brow, had not a promise been given to Mr. Colman, to perform at his theatre; and before the expiration of his honey-moon, he accordingly ventured to tread the London boards, June the 24th, 1796, in the arduous character of Octavian, in the Moun-

tainers, and Vapour, in the farce of my Grandmother: in each of these parts his efforts were crowned with success. Having thus fulfilled the promise he had made, he was obliged to return to Bath, to close the theatrical campaign of 1796, according to the letter of his article with Mr. Dimond. But Mr. Colman, being aware of the value of Mr. Elliston's youthful energies, secured him for the remainder of the season. A powerful reason soon after evinced itself for the manager's attachment to this dramatic strippling. The failure of the Iron Chest, on its original representation at Drury-lane theatre, and the singular circumstances attending it, are fresh in the minds of the *amateurs*. Sir. Colman was doubtless eager to preserve his literary fame, and holding the powers of our young actor in no inconsiderable estimation, determined on risking the performance of that play at his own theatre; and Mr. Elliston assumed the part of Sir Edward Mortimer, to the entire satisfaction of the public and the author*. In the course of the same season he acquired considerable celebrity from his personification of Sheva, in *The Jew*. The growing reputation of this gentleman at length induced Mr. Harris, the manager of Covent-garden theatre, to engage him to play at stated intervals, an indulgence kindly granted by Messrs. Palmer and Dimond, with whom he had now renewed his articles for three years. The novelty of this undertaking occasioned considerable jealousy in the Green room, and obtained for him the facetious appellation of

* That Mr. Colman was not only pleased, but delighted on this occasion, will be seen from the second edition of the Iron Chest.

the "Telegraph, or Fortnight Actor." His exertions in this way, however, did not answer the expectations of either party; and at his own earnest solicitation, Mr. Harris was induced to cancel the articles. During the following summer he resumed his situation at the Hay-market, with the same success as before, and then returned to Bath.

On the secession of Mr. Dimond, Mr. Elliston obtained a large addition of characters, and from this period to the time of his leaving that city, he may be literally considered as the prop of the theatre.

At this period Mr. Colman selected a company of performers* from different country theatres, and engaged Mr. Elliston for three years, as principal actor, and stage-manager; but being wanted at the Hay-market so early as the 15th of May, and the Bath theatre not closing till July or August, he was obliged to purchase the indulgence by a renewal of articles at Bath.

Although in the course of the season no particular novelty offered itself, with the exception of *Love laughs at Locksmiths*; yet it concluded successfully; the Royal Family, who, since a much-regretted and melancholy event*, had but once visited the Little Theatre for several years, having honoured it with their successive weekly commands, from an interest they took in the success of Mr. Elliston.

* See page 152.

† In the year 1794, his Majesty commanded a play at the Little Theatre, Hay-market, which drew a crowded audience to the house, and in endeavouring to obtain an early admission into the pit, a scuffle ensued in the entrance of the passage, which occasioned several persons to lose their footing on the steps to the pay-door. This produced the most dreadful confusion, and six or seven persons lost their lives.

The great variety of characters* into which the young manager had, from the nature of the undertaking, been obliged to throw himself, drew the attention of some of the winter proprietors; and pecuniary offers of no inconsiderable magnitude were proposed for his acceptance in the event of his joining the Drury-lane corps; but this point, however desirable to the gratification of his ambition, could not be brought about without the greatest inconvenience in respect to his other engagements. He would willingly have paid the forfeiture of 500*l.* by way of compensation to Messrs. Palmer and Dinond, but this was resisted, and the completion of his term demanded. After some negotiation, however, it ended in a compromise of giving up one year of the engagement; thus leaving him at liberty to listen to other proposals at the conclusion of the season of 1803. Accordingly at the end of that period, after a long and most laborious attention to the duties of his profession, he made a final bow to his friends at Bath, and prepared for a summer campaign.

The season of 1804 is rendered remarkable in the biography of this gentleman, from his benefit being at the Opera-house, where it attracted such crowds, that the house was literally taken by storm. At the entrance into the boxes, as well as at the pit, the torrent was so impetuous, that the door-keepers, money-takers, and assistants, were overwhelmed, and a scene of great con-

† The following enumeration will illustrate the assertion: Sir Edward Mortimer, Walter, Octavian, Abednego, Shera, Young Wilding, Doctor Pangloss, Captain Beldair, Henry V. Ben Block, &c. &c.

fusion ensued, which none but those who witnessed it can conceive. Fortunately, no accident occurred, and the kindness of a British audience extricated a favourite from one of the most painful and arduous situations it was possible to encounter. The play was Pizarro, and the receipts 600*l.* but if all the places occupied during the confusion had been paid for, they would have amounted to 1000*l.* being the largest sum of money ever received by an actor at his benefit.

In 1804 he accepted a situation at Drury-lane, where he was engaged as a principal performer, and to assume both sock and buskin; and where he has personified Hamlet, Benedick, Macbeth, Ranger, Othello, Doricourt, Romeo, and Penruddock. If the person of Mr. Garrick is to be considered as the standard of an actor's stature, Mr. Elliston may, if any thing, be taller than the unrivalled hero of the British stage, while the other parts of his person appear anatomically correct, and duly proportioned. To the countenance and eyes of this gentleman, Nature has certainly been favourable, as they contain those marks of expression which want only study to render him fully efficient in all the various duties of his profession. In respect to the expression and gracefulness of his attitudes, no objection can fairly be made. We have often attended to the deportment of his person, and never found cause to consider any part of his action as either redundant or inelegant.

Othello is a performance in which he is not regularly great; although he sometimes bursts upon the audience in such a manner as to excite admiration. The fire of his youth leads him in this character, as in Hamlet, into too much

occasional hurry, which time and reflection will no doubt soften down.

The requisites for the performance of Macbeth are of such a peculiar kind, that the man who possesses them in an eminent degree, is in some measure but ill calculated for parts of an opposite description; yet this ardent candidate for fame never assumes the character without exhibiting many features of originality in his delineation of it. His performance, however, is by no means so methodized as that of Kemble, or rendered so complete, when considered as a whole. Elliston dazzles us with repeated flashes of original genius and conception, leaving intervals to discover the imperfections of his youthful efforts. But his performance clearly shews that he may be in that character, what at present he is not. In respect to comedy, Mr. Elliston sustains a wide range with a happy effect; but his genteel characters have always been most esteemed. That mellowness, however, which time alone can bestow, is still wanting; and when he has been allowed more leisure for the study of his respective parts, he will perhaps become as celebrated for the greatness and perfection of his scenic efforts, as he is now for his usefulness and versatility.

In the late Mr. Tobin's play of the Curfew, Mr. Elliston has evinced considerable improvement in the scenic art; and with the exception of his performance in the Honey-moon, he never exhibited a more finished piece of acting on the London stage. His delivery is void of all rant, and the passions of the part he expresses in those under tones of voice which unite energy with a fine discrimination of feeling. He delineates all the transitions of the soul with

great descriptive excellence; preserves all the proportions of his portrait under a regular system of thought, and displays them in a rich and masterly tone of colouring. His Fitzharding is the *chef d'œuvre* of this gentleman.

If Mr. Elliston had any physical imperfection which was an obvious impediment to his professional exertions and prosperity, and which no endeavours on his part could remove, our publicity of it might appear ill-natured, and operate as an injury to his public life; but when we are about to mention his inattention to propriety of dress, our remarks must be only taken as they are really meant, namely, that of rendering his person accordant in every respect with the character he assumes, as well for his own reputation as the pleasing effect a well-dressed performer affords to his audience.

In the support of early English characters, in which the costume is, in a great degree, regulated by fancy, Mr. Elliston is more happy in the arrangement of his dress; but when he appears as a modern gentleman, he displays no taste in either the clothes he wears, or in putting them on. White *small clothes* with a blue coat and white waistcoat, constitute the dress of *his private gentleman*, either in winter or summer, which gives him more the appearance of a holiday-fop, or a smart hair-dresser, than an elegant gentleman. Mr. Elliston we think is less excusable for this negligence of attire than many of his brethren, because he mixes in the gay circles of fashionable life, where he must see men of elegant dress and deportment in a drawing-room. With a little more attention to the dressing of his hair, and to the costume of a private gentleman, he would appear to consi-

derably more advantage before the public than he has ever yet done. Nature has given him a good figure, and while he continues to offer himself to public notice, it is a duty he owes to the consequence of his public character and to his audience, to give the most decisive effect to whatever character he takes upon himself to assume.

He wrote a play called *The Venetian Outlaw*, which was represented with great success for several nights after his benefit at Drury-lane in 1805.

EMERY, Mr.—Is the son of theatrical parents whose talents were held in some estimation a few years back, in most of our principal country theatres. Young Emery was born at Sunderland, December 22, 1777, and was educated at Ecclesfield, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, where he also acquired a knowledge of music, and had made such a proficiency by the age of twelve, as qualified him for a seat in the orchestra of Brighton theatre, where he played the violin. He, however, soon grasped at higher honours than the duties of a mere musician, and started as a candidate for Thespian fame, in the part of Old Crazy, in the farce of *Peeping Tom*. His performance evinced talents of no ordinary stamp, and was honoured with loud and unanimous applause. For some few years Mr. Emery had to contend with the usual hardships and vicissitudes of Thespian itinerancy; but his great predilection for the stage inspired him with energy and perseverance to surmount all obstacles. After passing his *noviciate* principally in the Kent and Sussex district, his growing fame attracted the notice of the late Tate Wilkinson, the York manager, who engaged him to take the lead in low comedy.

established himself in favour with the enlightened audiences of York, and though at this period not more than fifteen years of age, acquired popularity by his just and characteristic delineation of *Old Men*, which laid the basis of his present reputation. His fame now reached the metropolis, and procured him an engagement from Mr. Harris, with whom he signed articles at the commencement of the season of 1797, for three years, at a rising salary. He made his *debut* both in play and farce, as Frank Oatland, in the *Cure for the Heart Ache*; and Lovegold, in the *Miser*; and it is no more than a just tribute to Mr. Emery's merit, when we observe that he sustained those diversified and opposite characters with superior abilities, and with a success commensurate to the most sanguine hopes of himself and friends. In the summer of 1801 he performed at the Hay-market, and principally assumed the rustic characters of the drama. In the art of drawing and painting he greatly excels, and only wants publicity to stamp value on the productions of his effective pencil.

That plain palpable simplicity of nature which Colley Cibber has so highly panegyrised in Nokes the comedian, is evidently in the possession of Mr. Emery, who as an actor manifests talents peculiar to himself: there is an ineffable ease, yet strength of description, that renders his personification of rustic characters singularly great; the auditor does not see a person labouring to be whimsical in the habiliments of a countryman, but a simple creature, whose looks, manner of giving the words, and actions, accord so naturally with each other, that the spectator is led to believe the person on the stage is the very character he represents. In confirmation

of our opinion, we think his Dan, in *John Bull*, is a striking instance of his great scenic powers; his delivery of the author is completely easy, and perfectly appropriate to the habits of a country lad; the scene where he informs Dennis Brulgruddery how he beat the bailiffs in old Thornberry's house with the warming-pan, is as great an effort of mimic action as ever adorned the stage. As the representative of Sheepface, he is particularly happy, and gives an entire new feature to the part. Sam, in the farce of *Raising the Wind*, makes a prominent picture of rustic artfulness: the play of his features, when Jeremy Diddler wants to borrow eight-pence of him, and the natural rustic caution which belong to the Yorkshire clown, are finely depicted by this comedian. There is a cast of character of a widely different nature, in which he is equally original and great. We recollect the part of Gibbet, in the *Beaux Stratagem*, was well sustained by Mr. Cubitt, once of Covent-garden theatre; indeed it was considered as his best character, and appeared to suit his cast of features better than any other; but Mr. Emery has the art of making up his face, and twisting himself into Farquhar's well-drawn portrait of the travelling Captain, with so much address, that an auditor would scarcely suppose it was possible for him to soften himself into any part in which simplicity and innocence of habit were its leading features. Orson, in the *Iron Chest*, is a character which exhibits nature in the coarsest features of barbarism, and it has been rendered very conspicuous by this comedian's assumption of the part: his first appearance in the *Robber*, seemed to impress the audience, that they had only seen the shadow of Orson before: Mr.

Emery's delineation of the character is a fine picture of savage nature characterized by a peculiar justness of colouring. There are many other parts which exist as corroborative evidence of this comedian's possessing qualities not attendant on one actor in a century.

ESTEN, Mrs.—The mother of this lady, Mrs. Bennett, wrote several novels, and had experienced all the vicissitudes of life; but at last, through the death of her husband and father, who were custom-house officers, became independent. From her the daughter received her theatrical instruction; and after a long courtship was married, though very young, to Mr. Esten, the purser of a man of war, who had been introduced to her by her brother, Thomas Pye Bennett, then a young officer in the navy. Mr. Esten having failed in some speculation of which great hopes were entertained, was obliged to leave his wife and two children. Mrs. Esten having now no friend but her mother, was induced to attempt the stage, which had hitherto never been her wish. She first spoke in tragedy before Mr. Dawes the Counsellor, who was so struck with the music of her voice, her figure, manner, and expression, that he declared it was his belief, that she would with care and attention become a great favourite with the public. Accordingly she was introduced to Mr. Harris, before whom she rehearsed, but who advised her to practise in the country before she appeared on a London stage. She accordingly went to Bath, where she made her *entré* in *Belvidera*, in *Venice Preserved*, and became a favourite in that city and Bristol. She then procured an engagement from the Dublin manager, and performed afterwards at

Edinburgh with so much success, that Mr. Harris was at last induced to give her an appearance at his theatre, in *Rosalind*, in *As You Like It*, Oct. 20, 1790. The applause she met with was unbounded, and she played during the whole of the season, without receiving any salary; but with the indulgence of appearing in whatever characters she chose; and towards the conclusion, in addition to a tolerable share of public esteem, she received a *free* benefit. Notwithstanding her success, every exertion was made for some time in vain, to procure her an engagement agreeably to her wishes for the ensuing season; for the characters in which she had played by her own choice, being chiefly those in which Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Jordan, and Miss Farren were most admired, Mr. Harris was conscious that though she had pleased, she was by no means equal to her rivals; however, by the recommendation of a Noble Personage, for which, it is said, she was indebted to the kind intercession of Mrs. Jordan, she at last procured an engagement upon very advantageous terms. After a long retirement from the Edinburgh stage, she made her re-appearance in 1803.

LYRE, EDMUND JOHN—This gentleman is of a respectable family, and received a classical education. Anxious to become a theatrical hero, he neglected his studies, left his friends, and joined a company near Windsor. His first attempt was Joseph Surface in the *School for Scandal*. He applied in vain for a situation at Drury-lane; but was engaged by Miell, for Worcester. He afterwards performed one night at Covent-garden for a benefit, in a farce of his own (which was not repeated), called *The Dreamer Awake*;

or, Pugilist Matched, 1791 ; besides which, he wrote The Maid of Normandy ; or, 'The Death of the Queen of France, tragedy, 1793 ; Consequences ; or, The School for Prejudice, comedy, acted at Worcester, 1794 ; The Fatal Sisters ; or, Castle of the Forest, dramatic romance, 1797 ; The Discarded Secretary ; or, Mysterious Chorus, historical play, 1798 ; The Castres ; or, Buried Alive, musical farce, acted at Covent-garden for a benefit, 1802.

This season (1806-7) he made his first appearance on the Drury-lane boards, in the character of Jaqu s, in As You Like It. Of his reception little can be said, as little or nothing was done to claim public favour ; though the good-nature of a British audience will often induce them to cheer a performer with the smile of *pity*, whom they cannot with conscience highly approve. His features have no expression ; his eyes are small, and apparently so weak, that they cannot impart any rays of passion necessary for the just delineation of character ; his voice is also feeble, and insufficient for the size of the house. We sincerely lament that a man of good education, and respectable private character, should be so wedded to a profession in which he is evidently below mediocrity, and in which his course must be *retrograde*. He may continue to strut and fret his hour upon the stage, but it will be only with the approbation of his own vanity.

FARLEY, Mr.—This performer was born near the theatre, and brought up to the stage from his infancy, having performed children's characters at Covent-garden when about eight or nine years old. He was afterwards an assistant to the prompter, the late Mr. Wild, and as soon as his

age permitted, he personated fops, &c. Having acquired a knowledge of pantomime, he has assisted in contriving and getting up several, particularly *Raymond and Agnes*, performed at Covent-garden 1797; *The Corsair*, or *Italian Nuptials*, Hay-market, 1801; *Red Roy*, or *Osywn and Helen*, ditto 1803; and *Valentine and Orson*, 1804. He supports parts like *Osrick*, in *Hamlet*, in a very respectable manner.

FAWCETT, JOHN—This highly distinguished comedian is the son of a performer who was much respected for talents and integrity in the days of Garrick. The subject of this memoir was born in London about 1769, and was intended for business by his father, who sent him to St. Paul's school, where he received his education, and afterwards bound him apprentice to a respectable tradesman in the city. Ambitious, however, to tread his father's steps, he eloped from his master, and joined an itinerant company, under the assumed name of Foote. His first appearance is said to have been at Margate, in Courtal, in the *Belle's Stratagem*. Having met with encouragement at this place, he went to Tunbridge, where he attracted the notice of Mr. Cumberland, the dramatist, and was particularly favoured by Lord Abingdon, who gave him some instructions in music. He was afterwards engaged at York, where he played three characters in tragedy; *Oronooko*, *Romeo*, and *Douglas*; but on the departure of Mr. Knight from the company, he made a positive stipulation that he should never be obliged to perform a tragic character again. He now married Mrs. Mills, then recently become a widow, and his fame in low comedy having reached London, he received for

Himself and wife a liberal offer from Mr. Harris, whose company had then felt the loss of Mr. Edwin; and he made a successful first appearance at Covent-garden, in Caleb, in He would be a Soldier, at the commencement of the season of 1791. The first part that brought him into general notice was Count Friponi, in Bate Dudley's opera of the Travellers in Switzerland, which he pourtrayed with considerable ability. In the course of two or three succeeding seasons his progress in his professional duties was extremely rapid, particularly in that line in which Edwin had been employed. On Mr. Bannister's leaving the Little Theatre in the Hay-market, in 1795, he recommended Mr. Fawcett to Mr. Colman, as the only person likely to sustain with any credit, that variety of characters in which Mr. Bannister had long distinguished himself. Mr. Fawcett soon gave ample proof of the extent and usefulness of his various powers. Each night added fresh laurels to his brow, and with his increasing fame, his interest rapidly gained ground, till Mr. Colman appointed him acting manager of the theatre. This situation he held with considerable credit to himself and advantage to the treasury, till the season of 1803, when the proprietor determined on opening at the stated time of his patent, with a company independent of the winter theatres. With the exception of last season, Mr. Fawcett has since performed during the summer months at the most respectable provincial theatres. Within these few years he has brought out several excellent pantomimes; Obi; or, Three Fingered Jack, performed at the Hay-market, 1800; Perouse; or, The Desolate Island, performed at Covent-garden, 1801; Brazen Mask; or, Alberto and Rosalie,

acted at Covent-garden, 1802; *Fairies' Revels*; or *Love in the Island*, acted at the Hay-market by children, 1802; and *The Enchanted Island*, founded on Shakspeare's *Tempest*, 1804. In each of these productions he has displayed considerable ability with respect to the arrangement of his materials, and the interest that he has attached to their representation.

This gentleman is an actor of great original merit, and whether his character be ancient or modern, his style of playing is peculiar to himself. It is said he never saw Edwin perform, and we have no reason to doubt this report; he, however, represents the characters of that comedian in the very first style of excellence, and without the least resemblance to the manner of Edwin.

Fawcett's *Lingo* is as good a piece of acting as we have on the stage. *Panglos* is a character as finely drawn as any in the whole range of the drama, and he unites in his delineation of the pedant, all the richness of the author's humour, with a chaste and classical colouring. There is a wide and opposite cast of characters, which he sustains with the happiest effect; indeed his acting is as near perfection as the efforts of human art can possibly reach.

The physical properties of this gentleman are certainly highly advantageous to his line of acting, which, though in no way singular or disagreeable as a private gentleman, make a very effective figure, either as a countryman, pedant, old man, Quaker, or Jew, &c. His voice too, has an agreeable harshness, which well accords with the whimsical sentiments of the Comic Muse, without lessening the force of a pathetic passage. In confirmation of this opinion, we mention Colman's beautifully drawn portrait of

Job Thornberry, in the comedy of John Bull. The transition of feelings, which so naturally animates the bosom of an aggrieved father, Mr. Fawcett depicts in the most masterly colours, and is particularly great in the scene where he throws off the waistcoat which his supposed disobedient daughter had worked for him. He looks the character, and pourtrays its minutest shades with all the feelings of a fond parent for the sufferings of a lost child.

Last season he was again engaged at Mr. Colman's theatre, to take the lead in the comic business of that company, and his services are of the first consequence to the proprietors and the public. All those rich morsels of comic character which belong to the little dramas of the above theatre, and which are in a great degree the offspring of Mr. Colman's genius, acquired an additional attraction when surrendered to the care of Mr. Fawcett.

There is no one in whose possession a bad part is so safe as in his; he can bustle through it, and keep up the interest of the other characters, and of the piece, while he supports his own part with the most powerful ability. In the course of last season he assumed for the first time the character of Lord Ogleby; a part which many persons have said died with Mr. King. First impressions we are very ready to allow are not easily removed, and if it were possible for Mr. Fawcett to perform it better than the late celebrated and justly esteemed comedian, the old amateurs of acting would only praise Fawcett in qualified terms, while the deceased comedian would be extolled in language of the highest panegyric. But we will venture to observe, after having seen them both in the above character, that King never played the part better

than Fawcett. It was an effort unconnected with imitation, entirely his own, and the conception and delineation of the scenic nobleman were perfect and masterly.

His first wife, Mrs. Mills, died in 1797, leaving behind her a daughter. He has since married Miss Gawdry, a very pretty and amiable woman, by whom he has a young family.

As a private individual, Mr. Fawcett preserves the dignity of a gentleman. There are no traits of his profession to be discovered in his conversation; he does not, like many performers, carry his *shop* upon his back, and attempt to entertain with *shreds* of plays and tricks of buffoonery. His private pursuits are said to be of an agricultural nature, which he turns to practical advantage at his farm near Hendon.

FITZHENRY, Mrs.—The maiden name of this actress was Flannigan. Her father kept the old Ferry-boat, a public-house at the lower end of Abbey-street, Dublin. She continued for some time the business of embroidery; and contributed towards the support of her aged father. At intervals she entertained herself with a play-book. Mr. Flannigan's dwelling being then at Bachelor's-walk, contiguous to the river, the captains and officers of the ships lying in the vicinity, made it the place of their rendezvous, and some occasionally lodged and boarded with him.

One of these, Captain Gregory, then in the Bourdeaux trade, engaged the attention of the daughter, and having procured her consent, they were united, and embarked together for life; but an adverse storm intercepted them in

their voyage, and the bridegroom was unhappily drowned. At this time her affectionate father also died, and the stage now seemed to be her only resource; accordingly she came to London late in the year 1753, and made her first appearance at Covent-garden theatre, in *Hermione*, in the *Distrest Mother*, Jan. 10, 1754; after which she performed *Alicia*, in *Jane Shore*, twice. A provincial accent impeded her success on the English stage, though her abilities were acknowledged to be great. She returned to Dublin, and was engaged by the then Irish managers, Victor and Sowden, at 300*l.* per season: when her fame so much increased, that she ventured to perform again at Covent-garden in 1757, which expedition was attended with both honour and emolument.

After this she became the ornament of the Irish stage for several seasons, and was married to Mr. Fitzhenry, a young lawyer of family and abilities. She was left a second time a widow, with a son and daughter, for whom, by her professional exertions, she made an ample provision, and retired from the stage during Mr. Daly's management, having in her farewell address strongly recommended Mr. Kemble to the notice of the public. She died at Bath in 1790.

GIBBS, Mrs.—This beautiful woman and interesting actress, made her *debut* on the boards of the Hay-market theatre in 1783; but though she was very favourably received, she quitted the stage at the conclusion of the season, her friends deeming her too young for public life. On the opening of the Royalty Theatre in 1787, she performed the part of Biddy, in *Miss*

in her Teens, and continued at the Royalty during Mr. Palmer's management, performing in pantomime, and speaking occasionally in addresses. On the present Mr. Colman's officiating for his father, she was again engaged at the Hay-market, where she supplied the place of Mrs. Stephen Kemble, with all the success which had accompanied the exertions of that lady. Here she found a wide field for the display of her unlimited powers, which were soon noticed by the managers of Drury-lane theatre, where she was engaged, and performed with the most flattering approbation of the public. But not satisfied with her situation at that house she exchanged it for Covent-garden, at which theatre she has continued ever since. The person of Mrs. Gibbs is among the first order of fine forms, with a countenance uniting loveliness with intelligence, and every lineament that shews an open and generous heart. Her eyes are blue, and extremely brilliant, and when employed to impart the sentiments of artless innocence, which compose her rustic and simple cast of characters, she moves every heart to the interest of her situation, and excites universal admiration.

Her Cowslip, in the Agreeable Surprise, is a most finished portrait of rustic life. There is no art visible in her efforts to conceal the actress; the spectator observes a simple girl under particular impressions of feeling, which she sustains in both dialogue and action with the happiest effect. Cicely, in the Heir at Law, is a part of a similar feature, and she personifies it with all that excellence peculiar to her extraordinary and great powers. Her Mary, in John Bull, is another character in simple life

in which it is impossible for any one to excel her. It is true, Mr. Colman has drawn the part of Mary with a perfect knowledge of the human heart, and in most masterly colours; yet however complete and perfect his pencil has rendered his pastoral portrait, the representation goes far beyond any scenic performance of a similar kind. It is a *chef d'œuvre* in the mimic art, and Job 'Thornberry's daughter will die with Mrs. Gibbs.

There is a vast variety of characters that might, in addition to the above, be enumerated to the honour of this lady's talents, in which we hope she will continue to delight the public for years to come. In private life, it is said that her manners are gentle, engaging, and elegant; her conversation is brilliant and instructive, and evinces a mind highly informed and accomplished.

GLOVER, Mrs.—This lady is the daughter of Mr. Betterton, some few years ago a member of the Covent-garden corps. Early in life Miss Betterton was introduced to the public as an actress on the Dublin stage; she afterwards played at Bath, where she was held in great estimation. In the season of 1797, her father and self were engaged at Covent-garden, and Miss Betterton made her first appearance in *Elvira*, in the tragedy of *Percy*, October 12th. Here she has continued a favourite with the public, and performed several principal characters with great success. During the summer of 1800, she performed at Birmingham, where she met with a gentleman of the name of Glover, of respectable connexion, to whom our young heroine soon gave her hand in marriage. It is said that his union with Miss

Betterton highly offended his parents and friends, and that his supposed fault has not yet been forgiven; as a compensation, however, for the loss of parental affection, he has got a virtuous and good wife, whose happiness is concentrated in the affections of her husband and family.

Mrs. Glover's talents are far above mediocrity; she supports a wide range of characters with every satisfaction to the public. Her representation of Lady Rodolpha Lumbercourt, in *The Man of the World*, is among a great number of characters which entitle her to our eulogium.

GOODALL, Mrs.—This lady is of theatrical parents of the name of Stanton, who were concerned in a *sharing company* in Staffordshire, and the daughter was consequently introduced to the public when very young. Her first attempt was in tragedy, and through her father's interest, she procured an appearance at Bath, where her performance of *Rosalind*, in *As You Like It*, gave much satisfaction, and ensured her an engagement in the comic line. In about three years after she became the wife of Mr. Goodall, a native of Bristol, and a lieutenant in the navy.

In 1788 she procured an engagement at Drury-lane, where she made her first appearance in *Rosalind*; and in the summer of the following year was engaged by Mr. Colman. Being admirably formed for male attire, she frequently represented those characters which are thus disguised. She resumed her situation at the Haymarket in 1803, but quitted it at the end of the season. It is reported that Mr. Goodall died lately.

GRIMALDI, Mr.—Is the son of a much cele-

brated clown in the days of Garrick. He was originally a dentist, and came to London in that capacity with her present Majesty. There are many anecdotes told of old Grimaldi, one of which is, that he greatly alarmed a gentleman who applied to him to draw his decayed tooth. The facetious dentist, after taking out the offensive member, slid the tooth of a horse into the gentleman's mouth, and drawing it out again all over blood, said, "Got bless my soul, here's a tootts! why, Sir, your fadder must have been a horse." The gentleman expressed his astonishment, and gave Grimaldi a guinea to take the wonderful tooth with him, to shew it as a curiosity.

The son appears to inherit all the humour of the father: when very young he commenced a buffoon at Sadler's Wells, where he continued to divert the public for several years; he was afterwards engaged at Drury-lane, and there he also played with an ample portion of public favour. But Dibdin's excellent pantomime of Mother Goose, has given him more room for the display of his talents, which, as a clown, are certainly of the very first description.

GROVE, Mr.—This comedian is the son of a respectable attorney, who died about the year 1798, at his residence in Villiers-street, Strand. Our hero was intended for the same profession as his father, but having formed an early acquaintance with theatrical people, he soon abandoned the study of the law for that of the drama. Encouraged in his theatrical pursuits by his associates, he made a trial of his comic powers at the Lyceum, in the Strand, in the part of Scout, in the Village Lawyer, and from the flattering

reception he met with, was induced to continue as an amateur for a considerable time, and occasionally played at the Hay-market, Sadler's Wells, &c. for the benefit of various persons who resort to that mode of getting a few pounds every year.

In conjunction with some young gentlemen, he built a private theatre in Tottenham-court Road, for the amusement and instruction of themselves and friends: here he personified a variety of comic characters, in which he evinced a perfect conception of his authors, and supported their scenic portraits with more than ordinary ability. At the commencement of the Hay-market season of 1803, Mr. Colman introduced him to the public, who received his efforts with approbation, in consequence of which he was engaged, and has proved a very useful acquisition to the theatre, in whimsical old men and scheming servants.

GWYNNE, ELEANOR—Better known by the familiar name of NELL, is said to have been born in the Cole-yard, Drury-lane (State Poems); sold fish about the streets; rambled from tavern to tavern, entertaining the company after dinner and supper with songs; and also sold oranges in the theatre.

She was next taken into the house of Madam Ross, a noted courtesan; and afterwards admitted into the theatre-royal as early as the year 1667 (see the drama of the Maiden Queen, and others of Dryden's plays, for ten years successively). Nell was mistress both to Hart and Lacy, two famous actors, who instructed her in the art of acting. The person of this celebrated woman, though below the middle size, was well

turned; her eyes were small, and her hair red, but her face very handsome. There is a bust of her now to be seen in Bagnigge-wells, which shews her to have been what the French call *en bon point*. That place was one of her country-houses, where the King and Duke of York frequently visited her, and where she often entertained them with concerts, breakfasts, &c.

The pert and vivacious prattle of the orange-wench, was by degrees refined into such wit as highly pleased Charles II. Indeed it was sometimes carried to extravagance; but even her highest flights were so natural, that they rather provoked laughter than excited disgust. A remarkable instance is recorded of her, when upon the stage; after she had died in some character, and the servants of the stage were preparing to carry her off, she started up, and exclaimed—

“ Hold, you d——d confounded dog,
“ I’m to rise and speak the epilogue.”

She is said to have been kept by Lord Dorset before she was retained by the King, and to have been introduced to the latter by the Duke of Buckingham, with a view of supplanting the Duchess of Cleveland. Nell, who knew how to mimic every thing ridiculous about the court, presently ingratiated herself with her merry Sovereign, and retained a considerable place in his affections to the time of his death. Another account is, if any credit may be given to a manuscript lampoon, dated 1683, that Mrs. Knight, a famous singer and favourite of Charles the Second, was employed by the King as a procuress; and was sent with overtures to Nell Gwynne, whom, as the same authority says, Lord Buckhurst would not part with till he was

reimbursed the expences he had lavished upon her. The King at length created him Earl of Middlesex for his compliance.

At the Duke's House, under Killigrew's patent, the celebrated Nokes had appeared in a hat larger than *Pistol's*, which pleased the audience so much, as to help off a bad play, merely by the effect of it.—Mr. Dryden, whose necessities often made him stoop to the whim of the times, caused a hat to be made of the circumference of a large coach wheel, and as Nell was low in stature, made her speak an epilogue under the umbrella of this hat, with its brim stretched out to its utmost horizontal extension. No sooner did she appear in this strange dress, than the house was in convulsions. Among the rest, the King gave the fullest proof of his approbation of her, by going behind the scenes immediately after the play, and taking her home in his coach to supper with him.

After this elevation she still continued on the stage; but being now at liberty to follow the bent of her genius, she never afterwards appeared in tragic characters. For the airy, fantastic, sprightly exhibitions of the Comic Muse, her genius was aptly calculated; and according to the taste of those times, she was considered as the best prologue and epilogue speaker at either theatre.

Nell met and bore good fortune as if she had been bred to it: she discovered neither avarice, pride, nor ostentation; she remembered all her theatrical friends, and did them service; she generously paid off her debt of gratitude to Mr. Dryden, and was the patroness of those eminent writers, Otway and Lee.

When she became more immediately connected

with the King, that gay monarch was already surrounded with mistresses; the Duchesses of Portsmouth and Plymouth, with Miss Davis* and others, were considered to be in that capacity; but these were known to be unrestrained in their conduct. Nell preserved her character to the last; and being once solicited by Sir John Germain, to whom she had lost a considerable sum of money at play, to exchange the debt for other favours, she no less honestly than wittily replied, "No, Sir John, I am too good a sports-woman to lay the *dog* where the *deer* should lie."

His Majesty had issue by her, *Charles*, surnamed *Beauclerc*, born about the middle of May, 1670, who was created Earl of Burford,

* Mary Davis was some time an actress in the Duke of York's company. She had one daughter by the King, namely, Mary, who took the surname of *Sudor*, and was in 1687 married to the son of Sir Francis Ratcliffe, who became Earl of Derwentwater. Nell Gwynne having notice that the above lady was to be entertained at night by the King in his bed-chamber, invited her to a collation of sweetmeats, which being made up with medical ingredients, caused some disastrous effects. Charles was so disgusted with his reception, that he dismissed her with a pension of a thousand a year, in consideration of her former services in affairs of love; after which she never appeared again at court.

As Nell was once driving up Ludgate-hill in a superb coach, some bailiffs were hurrying a clergyman to prison: she stopped, sent for the persons whom the clergyman mentioned as attestators to his character, and finding him a fit object for pity, paid his debt instantly, and procured him preferment.

When at Oxford, she was insulted in her coach by a mob, who mistook her for the Duchess of Portsmouth, upon which she looked out of the window, and said, with her usual good humour, *Pray good people be civil, I am the protestant wh—e.*—The Duchess of Portsmouth was a French woman and a papist.

This laconic speech drew upon her the blessings of the populace, who suffered her to proceed without farther molestation.

and afterwards Duke of St. Alban's; for whose use his mother is said to have bought Colonel Richard Ingoldsby's estate at Lethenborough, in Buckinghamshire. She had also by his Majesty another son, named James, born on Christmas-day, 1671, who died in France, about Michaelmas, 1680.

She lived long enough to see, and without doubt to lament, the decline of that family which had raised her to rank and fortune; having the good sense to avoid intermeddling with the politics of the times. After the king's death, she purchased a house in Pall-mall, where she lived many years greatly respected. Here she died in the year 1691, and was buried with great funeral solemnity in the parish church of St. Martin in the Fields; to the ringers of which she left a sum of money to supply them with weekly entertainments, which they enjoy to this day. She also bequeathed a large sum of money to furnish the poor debtors of Newgate with a certain quantity of bread per day; which gift the prisoners of that gaol have enjoyed to the present moment, and the philanthropic bequest of her will is stuck up in the court-yard of that prison. Dr. Tennison, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, preached her funeral sermon, or, according to the malice and prejudices of some envious and ill-natured persons, a fulsome panegyric upon her and her profession; nay, this circumstance was urged as an objection to Dr. Tennison's promotion; but Queen Mary defended his conduct and merit, by replying, "That it was a sign this unfortunate woman died a penitent; for had she not made a truly pious and Christian end, the Doctor could never have been induced to speak so well of her."

HAMILTON, Mrs.—This lady was a member of the Covent-garden corps in the year 1758. She and Mrs. Bellamy had a violent altercation. The latter's benefit was fixed for a night that happened to be Mrs. Cibber's at the other house, in consequence of which she requested Mrs. Hamilton to let her have Monday, and take in exchange her Saturday, who, as her interest did not lie among the box people, and for the credit sake of having the first benefit in the season, complied. She accordingly fixed on the *Rival Queens*, and notwithstanding it happened to be a wet afternoon, a concourse of people for the second gallery attended. As soon as that part of the house was full, she disposed of the overflow in the boxes and on the stage, wisely preferring their two shillings a-piece to empty benches. In the words of Mrs. Bellamy, "the heat of the house occasioned the wet clothes of the dripping audience to send forth odours not quite so sweet as those of Arabia." This lady having cast some reflections on the vulgarity of Mrs. Hamilton's audience, the latter took the following mode of revenge on the night of Mrs. Bellamy's benefit: the play which she had fixed on was the *Careless Husband*, in which Mrs. Hamilton's character was Lady Graveairs, and Mrs. Bellamy's, Lady Betty Modish. At half an hour after six, just before the play should have begun, she sent Mrs. Bellamy word that she would not perform the character of Lady Graveairs. It became necessary for so late a disappointment to make an apology to the audience for the delay that must ensue. Ross, who loved mischief, stimulated Mrs. Hamilton to the refusal of her services, enjoyed the storm, and consequently would not make the apology. Smith was so agitated, it

being the first time of his attempting Lord Foppington, that he could not do it. Poor Lady Betty Modish was therefore obliged to show her flounces and farbelows before their time, in order to request the patience of the audience till Mrs. Vincent could dress for the part which Mrs. Hamilton was to have performed. Mrs. Bellamy's petition was granted, as she herself relates, with repeated plaudits, and with an assurance from Mr. Town and his associates, that they would revenge her cause. This they did the very next night, when Mrs. Hamilton played the Queen, in *The Spanish Friar*, and Mrs. Bellamy Elvira, for the benefit of Mr. Sparkes. The Majesty of Spain then appeared in all the pomp of false jewels. She was so fond of these artificial gems, that Colley Cibber compared her head to a furze bush stuck round with glow worms, as her hair was extremely dark, and she had an objection to wearing powder. Upon her entrance she was saluted in a warmer manner than she wished, and was prevented for some time from speaking by *hisses*! at length, upon the tumult ceasing a little, she advanced, and addressed the audience in the following style: "Gemmen and ladies, I suppose as how you hiss me because I did not play at Mrs. Bellamy's benefit. I would have performed, but she said as how my audience stunk, and were all *tripe* people." When the fair speechifier had got thus far, the spectators in the pit seemed one and all transported at her irresistible oratory, for with one voice they encored her, crying out at the same time, "Well said, *Tripe*!" a title which she retained till she quitted Covent-garden theatre.

HARLEY, GEORGE—Whose real name is

Davies, is said to have been a tailor, in which line he continued for some time, till he was introduced to Henderson, who gave him instruction in the art of acting. His first appearance on the stage was at Norwich, April 20, 1785, in the character of Richard the Third, and by practice and industry, he became the hero of the company. His fame having reached London, he was engaged by Mr. Harris, and chose the same character for his first appearance at Covent-garden, 1789, after which he performed Lear, Iago, &c. He continued two seasons, representing the principal characters with applause at the small salary of forty shillings per week; but withdrew himself in 1791, till his salary was raised to five pounds per week, which he retained four seasons. He now performs chiefly at Birmingham and Sheffield, where he published *Memoirs of the Young Roscius*. He is also author of a volume of Poems.

HARLOWE, Mrs.—This actress made her first professional *debut* at Windsor, after which she became the heroine of Sadlers-Wells, where she acquired fame as a useful performer. She was afterwards engaged at Covent-garden, to represent smart chamber-maids, &c. but as her exertions were found of little or no value to the proprietors, she made but a short stay at the theatre. In 1792 she procured an engagement at the Hay-market, where she continued till within these two seasons. There is nothing brilliant or interesting in her acting. Her chief merit is usefulness, and in that light she is only to be viewed.

HARPER, Mr.—Was considered the best Falstaff

of his time. The first actor who appeared in this part after the Restoration, was Mr. Betterton, which he is said to have supported with all the various requisites necessary to sustain it. On his death, it lay dormant for some time, and probably would have remained much longer on the shelf, if Queen Anne had not by particular command ordered Booth to be its representative. But Falstaff had qualities which Booth's grave and dignified manner could not well assume; he therefore put on the habit *for one night only*, and then resigned it. That he did not venture a second attempt, might be owing as much to a predilection for the part of Hotspur, as a consciousness of deficiency in the part of Falstaff; however, the play being once revived, Mills was cast as the representative of Booth, but with little more success; neither his sober gravity nor judgment could reach the inimitable mirth of this stage prodigy, and he was, after being applauded in many scenes for his just conception of the author, obliged to resign the part to Harper, whose fat figure, full voice, round face, and honest laugh, more than made up for his want of intelligence, and at last fixed him in the Jolly Knight's easy chair. Harper was one of those comedians who, in 1733, revolted from the patentees of Drury-lane, and set up for themselves at the Little Theatre in the Hay-market. He was committed to Bridewell by Sir Thomas Clayes, upon the act made against common strollers; but having been brought up by *Habeas Corpus* to the Court of King's Bench, it was agreed he should be discharged from Bridewell upon his own recognizance. These comedians, while they were acting in the Hay-market under the authority of the Master

of the Revels, brought an ejectment upon a lease against the patentees of Drury-lane theatre. The cause was tried in the Court of King's Bench, Monday, November 12, 1733, and went in favour of the players, it having appeared that they took the lease of the two trustees appointed by the thirty-six sharers of Drury-lane house, with the consent of twenty-seven of those sharers, and on March 3, 1734, the comedians from the Hay-market took possession of Drury-lane, by virtue of their ejectment.

HENDERSON, JOHN—Was of a family originally Scotch, who settled in Fordall, a town in the north of Scotland. He was descended in a right line from the famous Dr. Alexander Henderson, whose name frequently occurs in the English history, on account of his conference with King Charles I. in the Isle of Wight. His grandfather was a quaker, and a very warm adherent of the celebrated Mr. Armesley in his suit with Lord Anglesea, in support of which he spent a considerable sum of money. His father was an Irish factor in the city of London, and resided in Goldsmith-street at the time of the birth of this son, who was baptized March 8, 1746-7. One year after his birth the father died, and left his widow and two children, both sons, with a very slender provision. The mother's care and attention, in some measure made up for the loss of their father, of which the subject of this memoir always spoke in terms of the most grateful acknowledgment.

At the age of two years, he was removed with his mother to Newport Pagnel, in Buckinghamshire, where he continued ten years, and afterwards went to a boarding school kept by Dr.

Stirling, at Hemel Hemstead, where he resided little more than twelve months. From thence he returned to London, and having discovered a taste for drawing, was placed for a short time as a pupil to Mr. Fournier, an artist of some eminence. While he remained with his master, he made a drawing which was exhibited at the Society of Arts and Sciences, and obtained a premium about the year 1767. With a person of Fournier's habits, it is not surprizing that Mr. Henderson should not continue long. On quitting him, he went to reside with Mr. Cripp, a silversmith, and near relation, of considerable business in St. James's-street, with whom it was intended he should be connected; but the death of that relative put an end to this scheme, and it is believed that from henceforward Mr. Henderson bent his attention entirely to the stage.

In the very early part of his life, his mother put a volume of Shakspeare into his hands, which he perused so often and with so much delight, that he became inspired with a passion for representing on the stage, characters which he read with so much satisfaction. His reception in the theatre met with many and very extraordinary impediments.

So early as the year 1768, he got himself introduced to Mr. George Garrick, who on hearing him rehearse, gave it as his opinion, that his voice was so feeble, that he could not possibly convey articulate sounds to the audience of any theatre; and it cannot be denied that there was then some ground for the observation, as his friends were apprehensive that he was in danger of falling into a consumptive habit. Not discouraged, however, by this repulse, he continued to pursue his favourite object, though with little prospect

of success. In a few years his health became more established, and having formed an acquaintance with Mr. Becket the bookseller, through his means he obtained an introduction to Mr. Garrick, the manager. At this gentleman's levee he attended for a great length of time, both noticed and neglected, till at last he grew weary of so irksome a state of dependence, and resolved to attempt by other means to exhibit himself before the public. Still, however, he experienced the mortification of being rejected in every offer. In 1770 he applied to Mrs. Phillipine Burton, a lady who was about to produce a comedy of her own writing, at the Hay-market, but was not received. He offered himself to Mr. Colman, who would not condescend even to hear him. It is said the first essay he made in public, was by delivering Mr. Garrick's Ode on the Jubilee, in a room at Islington, for the benefit of one of the inferior retainers of the theatre. At length, after more than two years attendance, Mr. Garrick was prevailed upon to hear him rehearse; but the opinion which this trial produced was by no means favourable—that his voice was not sufficiently melodious or clear, nor his pronunciation articulate enough; or, to make use of his own terms, “that he had in his mouth too much wool or worsted, which he must absolutely get rid of before he would be fit for Drury-lane stage.” However, not to discourage him entirely, he furnished him with a letter to Mr. Palmer, the manager of the Bath company; who, on this recommendation, engaged him at a salary of one guinea per week. On his arrival at Bath, he assumed the name of Courtney, and his first appearance on the stage there was October 6, 1772, in the character of Hamlet. He met with

universal applause, and after performing the character twice, repeated Mr. Garrick's Ode, and represented in the course of the season, the following characters: Richard III. Benedict, Macbeth, Bobadil, Bayes, Don Felix, Earl of Essex, Hotspur, Fribble, Lear, Hastings, Alonzo, and Alzuma. After he had repeatedly played the first nine characters, and found his reputation was fixed on a firm basis, he resumed his real name, and spoke an address to the town on the occasion, Dec. 22. He performed in the play and farce almost every night during the season, and had the satisfaction of increasing his fame every time that he appeared.

At the close of the Bath season he visited his friends in London, and passed the remainder of the summer in the metropolis, entirely disengaged from all theatrical employments. In the autumn he returned to his situation at Bath, and during that year added the characters of Pierre, Don John, Comus, Othello, Archer, Ranger, Sir John Brute, Belville, in the School for Wives; Henry II. Beverley, in the Man of Business; and Zanga, to those he had already represented. By this time the managers of the London theatres had seen his performances on the stage, and knew the reputation he had acquired: but steady to the opinion they had originally entertained, they could not think him worthy of being received into their service. During the course of this summer, application was made both to Mr. Garrick and Mr. Foote, in his favour, but without effect. In the autumn of 1774, he was obliged again to resume his former situation at Bath. After many ineffectual efforts to appear in London, accident at last brought him forward, without any

application on his part. In 1777 Mr. Colman having purchased the patent of the theatre in the Hay-market of Mr. Foote, and convinced of the necessity of novelty, engaged Mr. Henderson for that summer. So advantageous was this union to the manager, that in thirty-four nights' performance, no less a sum than 4500*l.* was taken.

The first character Mr. Henderson represented was Shylock, June the 11th. This was followed by Leon, Falstaff, Richard III. Don John, Bayes, and Falstaff in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. The avidity of the public filled the Hay-market theatre every night he performed. Even during the heat of summer, the house was crowded with people of the first fashion and first-rate abilities. The manager, who derived so much advantage from his success, gave him a free benefit, which produced him a considerable sum; and before the winter commenced, he was engaged by Mr. Sheridan for two years, at Drury-lane theatre, at a salary of 10*l.* per week, with an indemnification from the penalty of his articles with the Bath manager. In the summer of 1778, he went to Ireland, and was introduced to most of the literati of that kingdom. In July 1779 he married, and that summer went again to Ireland; and at the commencement of the winter season removed to Covent-garden theatre, with an increased stipend. He was now as much courted by the managers as formerly he courted them. He was exceedingly zealous in the service of the theatre. In the course of the last three months of his life, he performed several nights successively, very long and fatiguing characters, and sometimes, when he should with more propriety

have been in his bed. His last performance was *Horatius*, in the *Roman Father*, Nov. 3, 1785. He was soon after seized with a fever, which seemed to have submitted to medicines, but at a time when his disorder put on every favourable appearance, he was unexpectedly affected with a spasm in the brain, and died Nov. 25. He was interred in Westminster-abbey. It is said that he understood French perfectly, and spoke it fluently; and he acquired a knowledge of Latin under the late Rev. W. Davies, who succeeded Mr. Sellon to the living of Clerkenwell. He read with so much judgment, that Mr. Sheridan and he during the last season of 1785, entertained the town at Freemason's-hall, with reading some of the works of our best English writers.

His poetry, of which he left but little, shews that if he had cultivated his powers, he would have arrived at considerable excellence.

HILL, JAMES—Is a native of Kidderminster, in Worcestershire. Having lost his father at the age of four years, he was educated by an uncle, and apprenticed at the age of sixteen, to a painter. On the expiration of his indentures he visited London, where he remained about a fortnight, and then went to Bristol, where he was introduced to the managers of the Bath and Bristol theatres, to whom he communicated his wish to attempt the stage; but was informed, that their company was already filled, and that there was no prospect of a speedy vacancy. He then requested permission to perform one night to gratify his inclination, with which the manager complied, and he appeared in June 1796, in the character of Belville, in *Rosina*, when he

met with such a flattering reception, that full as his company was, the manager contrived to make room for him, and he was engaged for five seasons, during which time he became acquainted with Signora Storace, who recommended him to Rauzzini, by whose advice Mr. Hill placed himself under the tuition of Mr. Richards, the leader of the band at the Bath theatre, and having received a few lessons from Xamenes and others, finished his instructions with Rauzzini. Having performed a variety of vocal characters the two first seasons, with increased approbation, Mr. Harris, wishing to engage him for Covent-garden, applied to Mr. Dimond to release him from his articles, with which that manager obligingly complied.

His first appearance in London was in 1798, in the character of Edwin, in Robin Hood, in which he met with the approbation of the public. Under Mr. Harris's management he continued till the end of the season 1805-6, when he left the theatre for some *fancied* injury. He now performs in the country.

As a performer little can be said in his favour ; but as a singer he is entitled to our praise ; and with a due attention to his vocal studies, he might stand very high in the profession.

HOLLAND, CHARLES—Was a pupil of Mr. Garrick, under whose tuition he made some proficiency, and when that gentleman left London to make the tour of Italy for his health, was with Messrs. Geo. Garrick, Lacy, and Powell, acting manager. He was very useful, and had great requisites for a capital performer—a fine appearance, a strong melodious articulate voice, and a good understanding ; in short, he was

a favourite with the public, of which by industry and application, he rendered himself worthy. Holland introduced Powell to Garrick, and though Powell was his rival and superior, those actors were friends through life*.

He died at the age of thirty-six of the small pox, Dec. 7, 1769: his relations obtained leave from the Duke of Devonshire, at the request of Mr. Garrick, to place a monumental inscription by him in the chancel of Chiswick church, to his memory.

HOLLAND, Mr.—This gentleman is a descendant of the subject of the preceding article, and of a very respectable family. He received a good education, and was intended for one of the liberal professions; but in the prime of his youth he felt an ardour for Thespian honour, and left his home for Liverpool, where he made a successful application of his talents in a variety of characters. His respectable exertions in different theatres in the country procured him an

* There is an anecdote relative to the funeral of Holland. He was one of Foote's greatest favourites. George Garrick, who was one of Holland's executors, with his usual good-nature, undertook to manage the funeral in a way suitable to his friend's circumstances, for which purpose he went to Chiswick, and ordered a decent vault, and such other preparations as he thought necessary. Holland's father was a baker; Foote was invited to the funeral, which it is said he attended with unfeigned sorrow; for, exclusive of his real concern for the loss of a convivial companion, whenever he had a serious moment he felt with very strong susceptibility. While the ceremony was performing, G. Garrick remarked to Foote how happy he was, out of respect to his friend, to see every thing so decently conducted. "You see," said he, "what a snug family vault we have made here." "*Family vault!*" said Foote, with tears trickling down his cheeks, "D—me, if I did not think it had been the family *even!*"

engagement at Drury-lane theatre, where he made his first appearance in the character of Marcellus, in *Hamlet*, and received an ample share of applause. He remained some time in the theatre before he obtained an opportunity of exerting his abilities. On the death of Mr. Palmer, Mr. Barrymore performed the above gentleman's parts; Mr. Holland then succeeded Barrymore in Count Wintersen, in the *Stranger*, which gave him an additional reputation with the public and the manager, for his able support of the part; and some time after, on the indisposition of C. Kemble, he performed Alonzo, in *Pizarro*, and Palmer's character of Sydenham, in the *Wheel of Fortune*. His personification of these parts, fully proved a correct judgment and extent of talent.

He left Drury-lane theatre in 1806 for Covent-garden, where he had not remained many days before he felt dissatisfied with his new engagement, and requested the return of his articles, with which the manager immediately complied. We cannot but express our regret at the loss of this performer to the stage, as no man ever dressed a part better than himself, or looked more like a gentleman in whatever he assumed, that required the habits and costume of a gentleman. In the cast of characters which he in general supported, we do not recollect any one who was altogether so excellent as Mr. Holland. He gave great effect to the language of his author, of which he always took care to be master; and went through the business of the stage as a man who delighted in his profession, and was sensible of his duty to the public. We hope the little difference which caused his departure from London, will be soon

adjusted, and that he will next season resume his situation at Drury-lane, as we are certain Mr. Eyre, who was engaged to fill his department, is only an apology as a substitute for Mr. England.

JOHNSTON, HENRY ERSKINE--Was born at Edinburgh, May, 1777. While at school, he performed in several private plays, often the hero, and for want of female assistance as often the heroine. On leaving school he was placed by his father in the office of a writer to the signet; but his active spirit discovering an aversion to this sedentary life, he was apprenticed to an eminent linen-draper, whom, after about three years servitude he left, and gratified his inclination for the stage. In 1794 he made his first appearance on the Edinburgh stage, when he recited Collins's Ode on the Passions, for the benefit of a friend. Mr. Stephen Kemble, struck with his youthful exertions, offered him such terms as removed all the objections of his parents and friends.

The opposite characters of Hamlet and Harlequin were the first he performed on a public stage, and such was the reputation he established, that in the course of the summer he obtained the appellation of the *Scotch Roccus*. He was afterward engaged by the manager of Dublin, to perform at his theatre twelve nights, seven of which were devoted to his representation of Douglas. In this, his favourite part, he made his appearance in London, at the theatre-royal Covent-garden, 1797, when the greatest objections were a provincial accent, and redundancy of action, which his industry and judgment soon corrected. During the summer seasons he has performed at Birmingham, Manchester, and other respectable

country theatres with considerable applause; and afterwards became a member of the Hay-market corps, where he displayed a variety of talent. Through the recommendation of Mr. Bannister, he was engaged at Drury-lane, in which theatre he only stayed two seasons, and then returned to Covent-garden. Here he did not feel long satisfied with his situation, and at the end of the season 1805-6 left London for a professional tour through England and the sister kingdoms.

He married the daughter of Mr. Parker, proprietor of an exhibition, called the Storming of Seringapatam. This lady made her first appearance, 1799, in *Lady Contest*, and met with a very flattering reception, in consequence of which she trod the boards of Covent-garden in the winter of the same year, as a professional actress, and for the second time performed *Ophelia*, in which she displayed considerable ability. Since that period she has exerted herself in the higher walks of comedy with great success.

JOHNSTONE, JOHN—This justly admired actor was born at Kilkenny, August 1, 1749. His father was quarter-master, riding-master, and pay-master, to one of the regiments of horse in Ireland; and Mr. Johnstone was then intended by his father for the army. At the age of twelve, he was articled to Mr. Jones, attorney in the city of Dublin, with whom he continued for five years. He used frequently to call on Mr. Ryder, the then manager of the Dublin theatre, to transact his official business, and by that means obtained a free admission into the theatre. This gained him an acquaintance with the performers, and made him entertain a favourable opinion of the stage. He often

expressed a wish to become a candidate for theatrical fame, but at this time his profession and youth prevented him. He was a great favourite with his master, and would have succeeded him in his business had not an unfortunate altercation taken place. A gentleman having eloped with Mr. Jones's daughter, and a fruitless search having been made by the distracted parent, he returned home much chagrined and agitated, and in his anger was going to horsewhip his poor clerk, who very spiritedly resented the intended affront, and a separation soon after ensued. Mr. Johnstone having saved about 130*l.* during his clerkship, resolved to abandon Dublin and take a peep at London, where he was soon disburthened of his pecuniary savings. His money, clothes, and all his property having vanished, he might have wandered an hapless stranger, had he not met with a merchant from Dublin, who was importuned by his mother to seek him out, and if he required assistance to relieve him: all this was happily and speedily effected, and Johnstone returned home with the merchant; but having refused to resume his business, his mother spoke to a distant relation, who was a lieutenant-colonel in the army, to procure him a respectable situation in his regiment. This was accomplished: Johnstone was made a *Cadet*, and remained in that situation for two years. He was a great favourite with the officers, and used to write his colonel's letters, and transact all his official business for him; and would, no doubt, have met with speedy promotion, had he not quarrelled with a lieutenant who belonged to the same regiment. The lieutenant

had attached himself to a lady who preferred Johnstone to her paramour; jealousy ensued, and in an altercation between the rivals, the lieutenant made use of certain terms of reproach which did not altogether agree with the spirit of Johnstone tamely to receive, he therefore in return, gave his antagonist a very severe castigation. This breach of discipline could not be overlooked, though it was never intended to be resented. He was called to a court martial to be held in Clonmell, where the regiment was then quartered; but unwilling to undergo the trial, he immediately rode off to Dublin, and through the interposition of his patron, the colonel, a farther investigation was instantly dropped.

Being now a second time thrown upon the world, he thought it a favourable opportunity of putting his youthful inclination into execution: he applied for an engagement to Mr. Ryder; and, notwithstanding every opposition of his mother and friends, he made his appearance at the theatre in Smock-alley, in *Lionel and Clarissa*, as the hero of the piece. His reception was in every way flattering, and his merit obtained him a profitable and permanent engagement. Mr. Macklin having been engaged during the summer months in Ireland, had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Johnstone perform, and conceived a most favourable opinion of his abilities, both as an actor and singer. On his return to London, he recommended both him and his wife to Mr. Harris, who accordingly engaged them for three years, at the weekly salary of fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen pounds per week, Oct. 3, 1783. Mr. Johnstone made his appearance in London with success, in his former character of *Lionel*, having been

upwards of seven years on the Irish stage. He remained several years at Covent-garden in the vocal line, but at length was induced to become more the actor than the singer. The characters of Irishmen were at this time ill supported at all the London theatres. Mr. Johnstone accordingly made the attempt, and succeeded beyond example. His reputation procured him an engagement during the summer at the Hay-market theatre. He was one of the principal performers who remonstrated with the proprietors of Covent-garden in 1801, respecting their new regulations; notwithstanding which, his engagement was renewed; however, he went to Drury-lane theatre in 1803, upon better terms; and having left the Hay-market theatre, on account of the new regulations with respect to opening the house on the 15th of May, he visited Dublin in the summer of 1803, where martial-law being declared on account of the rebellion, he and the other performers were under the necessity of performing in the day-time; and in order that the entertainments might be concluded before eight o'clock in the evening, they commenced at one o'clock. He made his appearance in *Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan*, in *Love A-la-mode*; and *Loony Mackwolter*, in Colman's whimsical farce of *The Review*; and introduced himself to his countrymen, who were loud in their congratulations, with an Occasional Lyric Address, written by Mr. F. Dibdin. He has been twice married, and by his present wife, who is the daughter of Mr. Bolton, wine-merchant, he has some fine children.

In the records of the stage, we cannot find any actor who distantly approaches Mr. Johnstone. Moody enjoyed, when in the zenith of his

theatrical glory, great eulogium for his delineation of Irish characters. We remember that veteran of the sock about sixteen years back, and we have seen him repeatedly play that cast of character which is supported by Mr. Johnstone; but had the two comedians been contemporary rivals in the opposite theatres, and paralleled, it would have been placing a Scotch pebble beside a diamond, and Moody would have been lost in the lustre of the other.

Johnstone may be considered one of the greatest players that ever trod the stage; his acting is nature coloured in the richness of her own perfection. Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan, and Major O'Flaherty, are parts in which he is particularly happy in supporting the gentleman, with the finest vein of humour. Johnstone pourtrays Teague, a low Irishman, in Knight's farce of *Honest Thieves*, in the most exquisite colours, and provokes his audience to the most irresistible laughter; his words drop like honey from his mouth, there is no labour to be whimsical, but his humour comes with so much ease, that it instantly rivets public attention, and keeps the risible faculties in a continued state of relaxation during the scene. In O'Keefe's comedy of *The London Hermit*, he performs an Irish gardener, and there never was a character so truly entertaining as Tully, particularly when he reads his "Describing Book," as it is called, to his master's visitors. The part of Dennis Brulgrudery, in the comedy of *John Bull*, is in itself so pregnant with humour, that an indifferent actor must receive applause in playing it. Mr. Rock assumed the Irish landlord at Covent-garden after Mr. Johnstone's retirement; but when we turn our recollection to the original representa-

tive, comparison will not bear reflexion. Johnstone stands alone; his style of painting the passions and native oddities of honest Dennis, exceeds description; his beauties are to be seen and felt with delight, but cannot be minutely illustrated; they are like the masterly touches of a fine picture, the more the observer points out its perfections, the more his eye will discover for gratification and praise. His merit is original, and peculiar to himself, and when imitated, shews the imbecility of the copyist.

JORDAN, DOROTHEA — This charming woman, and highly distinguished performer, is the daughter of an actress, whose father was a Welsh Dignified Clergyman. Mrs. Jordan's mother eloped with a Captain Bland, a gentleman of some property, then on duty in Wales, to Ireland, where they were married, and had nine children. His relations, however, procured the marriage to be annulled, and no provision was made for the abandoned wife and her family. Miss Bland (now Mrs. Jordan) when she grew up, with a laudable spirit, determined to attempt the stage for the support of herself and family. She made her first appearance in Dublin under the management of Mr. Ryder, in the character of Phœbe, in *As You Like It*. Fearful of drawing any odium on her father's family, for whose future favours she still hoped, she assumed the name of Miss Francis, but afterwards played a few nights by her own, in consequence of some proud reflexions they had made, but of which probably they repented, as she soon after resumed her fictitious name.

She was little noticed as an actress in Dublin till she performed at Mr. Daly's theatre, where

she appeared to some advantage in tragedy, particularly in the character of Adelaide, in the Count of Narbonne, but having been insulted by the manager, she left Dublin, accompanied by her mother, and went to Leeds, where the York company was then performing. She applied to Mr. Wilkinson, the manager, for an engagement, who asked her what line she chose, whether tragedy, genteel comedy, low comedy, or opera? She answered, to his great astonishment, she would attempt *all*. Though he much doubted such versatile talents, he promised her a trial, and she was accordingly announced for Calista, in the Fair Penitent, with songs after the play; and Lucy, in the Virgin Unmasked: all which she accomplished in one night, under the name of Mrs. Jordan, which she then assumed. Her success was so great, that the manager gave her every encouragement. Having quitted Dublin, however, before the expiration of her articles, Mr. Daly threatened to arrest her for the forfeiture, if she did not immediately return. In this crisis she met with a friend in an elderly gentleman, who having inquired into every circumstance, found that she was most unjustly and cruelly persecuted, and therefore relieved her from her fears, by paying the demanded sum, which was 250*l*.

In this company she continued three years, with increasing reputation; when Mr. Smith, then belonging to Drury-lane, happened to see her perform during the York races, and was so pleased with her abilities in tragedy, that he recommended her to the managers of that theatre, to play second to Mrs. Siddons; and she was accordingly engaged at four pounds per week. On her arrival, she was prompted by her natural ambition, to aim at becoming the

first in comedy, rather than the *second* in tragedy, and therefore chose the Country Girl for her introduction. This comedy had been some time lying on the shelf, and the revival of it, aided by her inimitable acting, in which she displayed so much novelty and humour, caught the attention of the public; and, according to her wishes, she arrived at the very achme of excellence. The managers doubled her salary, and soon after raised it from eight pounds to twelve, with two benefits in the season. During the summer vacations she performed at Cheltenham, Edinburgh, &c. with much applause, and so established her theatrical reputation, as to possess the best salary at Drury-lane, till her temporary retirement from the stage, at the end of last season, 1806. Her mother died in 1789, and by the death of another relation, she received a considerable addition to her income. Like most public characters, she has been involved in some theatrical disputes, which have never tended however to diminish her fame. She is kind to her relations, and has ever been found willing to perform for the benefits of all those who have stood in need of her assistance. With such laudable motives she has been frequently seen on the boards of Covent-garden theatre. She has several children, and during the summer resides in the neighbourhood of Richmond, where she occasionally performs, and generally practises new parts previous to her attempting them in London. Since Miss Farren's retirement from the stage, Mrs. Jordan has displayed her powers in a cast of characters very different from her usual walk in the drama.

There are various opinions with respect to the comparative merits of the above ladies in elegant

comedy: though the figure of Miss Farren was, perhaps, better calculated for the support of light airy characters in the higher department of comedy than the person of Mrs. Jordan, yet Miss Farren's deportment, voice, and action, we think was far less effective than those extraordinary qualities which are concentrated in Mrs. Jordan. Her voice is so divinely mellifluous, that the most insignificant sentence acquires importance, and steals upon the feelings, from her distinct and harmonious delivery. Her attitudes are all so chaste, yet strongly expressive of the passion she delineates, that if she were not to speak, her story would be clearly intelligible to her audience. If the public had never seen Mrs. Jordan in a character similar to Nell (in which she is eminently great), her personification of Lady Teazle, and parts of the same description, would have obtained for her all the eulogium to which her merits deservedly lay claim: but first impressions are difficult to be removed; and therefore it has been thought, that no versatility or extent of talent afforded this lady the power of being Lady Teazle in the play, and Nell in the entertainment. Under this impression only, many persons have arraigned with critical severity, her assumption of elegant personages in comedy. We however differ with their opinion, that her *fine ladies* are representations less happy than those of her pastoral characters. Mrs. Jordan is an actress void of imitation, and her colouring of a part has no affinity to the style of playing which characterized either Miss Farren or any other performer; consequently her original manner of performing Lady Teazle, not being exactly like Miss Farren's representation, has been taken as a proof

of inferiority and inability for the support of the heroine of the *School for Scandal*. But the advantages Mrs. Jordan has, of elegant and polished society, together with a highly accomplished mind and a natural cheerfulness of disposition, abundantly qualifies her for the delineation of fashionable life; and when her descriptive powers are called into action, in either the gay or sentimental provinces of the drama, we do not hesitate to consider her labours of the very first description, and among the most perfect on the stage, which is a branch of the fine arts, that unites entertainment with moral and useful instruction.

INCLEDON, CHARLES—This popular singer is the son of an apothecary in Cornwall, where he was born. At an early age he was put apprentice to Mr. Jackson, the composer, of Exeter, and went afterwards to sea, in which service he remained upwards of two years.

On his return, having been much praised in private for his vocal abilities, he determined to make a trial of them in public. He was recommended by Lord Mulgrave and Admiral Pigot, to the late Mr. Colman; but having met with no encouragement from that gentleman, he joined a company at Southampton, where his first theatrical essay was in *Alphonso*, in the *Castle of Andalusia*. Here he continued upwards of a year, attracting much of the public attention, and obtained the patronage of Rauzzini, who not only took him under his tuition, but introduced him in his concerts. Having made another application in vain to the London managers, he accepted an engagement at Vauxhall, but in the ensuing winter made his first ap-

pearance at Covent-garden in Dermot, in the Poor Soldier, with so much success, as to obtain a permanent situation on liberal terms. In the summer of 1803 he visited Dublin, and on his return to England, was wrecked in passing the bar, and several of the passengers were lost: he saved himself by climbing to the round-top, with his wife lashed to him, in which condition he remained for several hours, and was at length delivered by some fishermen, who saw their distress from shore.

After his return to Dublin, he again advertised his entertainment, with the addition of 'The Storm.

He has been twice married; and had children by his first wife, on whom (before he entered the second matrimonial engagement) he made a settlement of all he possessed.

In the delivery of dialogue, Mr. Incledon is comparatively good with the generality of singers; and he is not deficient in the deportment of his person, when a part or song requires much action. He has great powers of voice, united with considerable sweetness. No one gives the true English ballad with better effect. He is doubtless a great acquisition to the English opera, and highly serviceable to Covent-garden theatre, where he has now no competitor.

KELLY, MICHAEL—Is the son of a gentleman who was Master of the Ceremonies at Dublin, and a wine merchant of considerable eminence.

Very early in life he evinced a strong predilection for music, and occasionally sung at concerts; after which he was instructed in music by the son of the famous Dr. Arne, and then sent to a college at Naples, called *Il Conservatorio di*

Musica, where he became a pupil of the celebrated Aprilli, with whom he went to different parts of Italy, and distinguished himself as a person of considerable vocal ability. He afterwards went to Vienna, where the exertion of his talents increased his celebrity, and gained him the marked attention of the Emperor, who gave him a lucrative and honourable situation, which he held four years, and then had permission to leave the country, in consequence of the invitation of the late Mr. Linley, who from the time of Mr. Webster's death had frequently urged Mr. Kelly to accept a situation at Drury-lane theatre. The Emperor immediately granted him leave of absence for twelve months, and the continuation of his pay, with a promise of a pension for life if he felt inclined to return to Germany. On his arrival in England, in 1787, he made his first appearance at the above theatre in the character of Lionel, in *Lionel and Clarissa*, and was received with the most flattering approbation. Here he assumed the first line of vocal business, and has continued ever since in an uninterrupted enjoyment of public favour, not only in London, but most of the principal cities in the three kingdoms.

In 1793, he and Mr. Stephen Storace, his fellow student at Naples, were made joint-managers of the King's Theatre; Mr. Kelly was also engaged as first tenor in both the serious and comic departments of the opera, which situation he continued to fill for several seasons, and now retains the stage management of the above house.

On the death of his much-esteemed friend, Storace, he undertook to furnish music for *Blue Beard*, which, on the performance of the

piece, met with public approbation, and induced him to assume the character of a composer. He has since produced a vast variety of popular music. In 1802. he opened a saloon in Pall-Mall, adjoining the opera-house, for the sale of music, where the public meet with every accommodation, and great variety of scarce music. He is much esteemed as a pleasant companion, and a good private character.

KEMBLE, ROGER—This performer is only introduced, from his having given birth to a family who rank in the highest class of histrionic excellence. He was educated at a school near Hereford, and at a very early age attempted the stage. He was engaged by Mr. Ward, manager of a strolling company, but said to have been a very excellent actor, who had made a respectable figure on the London stage during the times of Betterton and Booth. Mr. Kemble having married his daughter, succeeded him as manager. At the advanced age of seventy, he appeared for the first time in London, at the Hay-market theatre, in the character of the Miller of Mansfield, for his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Stephen Kemble, Aug. 26, 1788. It is reported that he did not intend any of his children for the stage. His daughters are all married. The eldest, now Mrs. Siddons; Miss E. Kemble, now Mrs. Whitlock; and Miss F. Kemble, now Mrs. Twiss. Mr. Kemble died Dec. 6, 1802, aged eighty-two; and his wife, the mother of this celebrated family, in April 1807.

KEMBLE, JOHN PHILIP—This great and generally admired tragedian was born, it is said, at Prescott, in Lancashire, in the year 1757. His

father, who was a papist, placed young John at a Catholic school in Staffordshire, whence he was removed to an English college at Douay, in order to complete his studies for the profession of a priest. At this celebrated seat of learning he became much noticed for the strength of his memory, and greatly admired for his happy mode of delivery.

The confinement of a college life became in the course of time very irksome to young Kemble, whose thoughts and inclinations were wholly employed on the affairs of the stage; and he accordingly quitted Douay before he was twenty, without the consent of his father.

Having landed at Bristol, he walked to Gloucester, where hearing that his father's company was at Brecknock, he proceeded thither, but met with a cool reception: his father actually refused to relieve him, but the performers generously assisted him with money, by way of subscription, to which his father, according to report, was with difficulty persuaded to add a guinea.

On this he returned to Gloucestershire with his pittance, and joined Chamberlin's company at Wolverhampton, where he made his first appearance in the character of Theodosius, in the *Force of Love*. His profits were scanty, and his distress great, which sometimes involved him in rather ludicrous situations. Kemble's chief fault seemed to be an unaccountable negligence, but he was still looked on as a rising actor.

In hopes of increasing his profits and reputation, he joined the manager of Cheltenham theatre. In order to give a miscellaneous entertainment, young Kemble was to lecture, and his

partner was to entertain the company with *slight of hand tricks*. Kemble obtained great credit by his eloquence, but neither of them gained much money.

Mr. Kemble then joined a company at Worcester, where he remained until his sister introduced him to Mr. Younger; from which time he gradually improved, until he attained a high degree of eminence in his profession. About this period he produced *Belisarius*, a tragedy, and a poem, called the *Palace of Mercy*.

He afterwards joined Mr. Wilkinson at York; who, being appointed manager at Edinburgh, took Kemble with him. In that capital he was well received; and there he delivered a lecture on Oratory, which gained him reputation as a man of letters. In 1782 he went to Dublin, and joined Mr. Daly's company in Smock-alley, where he made his first appearance in *Hamlet*, in which character he greatly distinguished himself. In the *Count of Narbonne* he acquired much fame, though it was the author's opinion, when applied to, that it was impossible for Mr. Daly to get it up; but he afterwards acknowledged, that the *Count* was better performed than it had been in London by Mr. Farren. At that period Mr. Kemble was not considered very successful in comedy, if we may judge from the following anecdote. He performed *Sir George Touchwood*, when Mrs. Cowley's *Belle's Stratagem* was first represented in Dublin; but it is said that he discovered more *spirit* behind the scenes than on the stage; for one evening after the second act, the manager, Mr. Daly, who played *Doricourt*, told him he must exert himself more, and desired he would take example after him. Such imperious conduct

offended Mr. Kemble, who immediately changed his dress, and said he might get some one else to finish the part; nor did he resume the character till the manager begged his pardon. Though not so happy in comedy, he was remarkable for risibility; and at this time, the most trifling incident would spoil his serious countenance in tragedy. During his first performance of Mark Antony, in *All for Love*, he happened to look up, and observing a pedantic old figure who was leaning over the upper box, with a *listening trumpet* to his ear, he began to smother a laugh. This at first appeared agitation, it having been the most pathetic scene of the play, where he was surrounded by his wife and children (Octavia, Mrs. Inchbald); but no longer able to contain himself, to the great astonishment of the audience, his laugh became loud and immoderate, and it was some time before he was able to finish the character.

In 1784 he made his first appearance in London, at Drury-lane, in the character of Hamlet, and his exertions met with considerable applause. He has often repeated it, always in an improved state; and it is now the most finished piece of acting on the English stage. He afterwards assumed a great variety of tragic parts, many of which he performed with acknowledged excellence.

In the year 1787, Mr. Kemble married his present wife, the widow of the late Mr. Brereton, and daughter of the late Mr. Hopkins, formerly prompter of Drury-lane theatre.

As various false reports have obtained credit respecting this match, and more particularly as the circumstances which led to, and attended it,

have been misrepresented, we give the following authentic statement of the case.

A certain deceased Nobleman, and *ci-devant* Minister of State, having discovered in his daughter symptoms of a lurking passion in favour of our hero, sent to request an interview. In the course of the conference which took place, his Lordship very politically observed, that to prosecute the enterprise on the part of Mr. Kemble, would be a fruitless and vain attempt—that proper and effectual means of precaution would be adopted, to render the completion of such a project abortive; and finally, that even in an extreme case, no pecuniary advantage would accrue. Yet, as he wished to keep his mind at ease, and not be under the necessity of standing sentinel over his daughter, he was willing to make a proposal, by acceding to which, Mr. Kemble would at once consult his own interest, and secure his Lordship's peace. His Lordship then proceeded to state, that provided Mr. Kemble would quiet his paternal apprehensions, by taking to himself a wife, he would give him the sum of 4000*l.* within a certain given period after the celebration of the nuptials. With respect to the person of his future partner for life, he left Mr. Kemble (with the exception of one lady) to his own unbiassed choice, only stipulating, that the match should take place within a fortnight at the farthest.

In consequence of this conversation, our hero began to cast his eyes about him, and soon fixed his choice on Mrs. Brereton. The courtship was instantly commenced, and Mrs. Brereton once more consented to become a bride.

In due course of time, Mr. Kemble waited upon his Lordship to claim the performance of his promise. His Lordship received him with great politeness, and congratulated him on his nuptials; but when he proceeded to refresh his Lordship's memory with respect to the promised dowry, he was rebutted in a strain of the most cutting and severe irony;—a talent, indeed, for which his Lordship was eminently celebrated. He was asked what interest his Lordship could have in his domestic arrangements? On what plea he expected to be paid 4000*l.* for marrying a pretty girl?—Was he in earnest, or was he acting? His Lordship was fully sensible of, and duly admired his great theatrical talents, but there was no occasion for him to assume the actor in the present instance—his Lordship would take an early opportunity of witnessing his excellent performance on the public stage; meanwhile he begged leave to assure him of the high sense he entertained of his professional merit, and with these remarks his Lordship very politely took his leave.

The conduct of his Lordship in this affair, was not very honourable to him as a gentleman and a man of honour. Mr. Kemble, however, acquired by his Lordship's *artifice*, a compensation paramount to wealth—a virtuous and amiable wife, with an accomplished mind.

On the secession of Mr. King in 1788, he was appointed stage manager at Drury-lane, which situation he resigned in 1796, but which he shortly after resumed, till the year 1801.

During his management he revived many excellent old pieces, in several of which he made judicious alterations. In 1786 he produced a farce, called *The Project*; in 1788, another,

called the Pannel, taken from the comedy of *It's Well it's no Worse*; and in 1789, *The Farm-House*, taken from the *Custom of the Manor*. He altered Mrs. Behn's comedy of *The Rover*, and called it *Love in many Masks*, 1790; and translated from the French a musical romance, called *Lodoiska*, which was acted with great applause in 1794. Previous to the season of 1801, he refused to retain his situation of acting-manager, without he was invested with more power than before, which was accordingly promised, but after a few weeks, complaints arose among the performers, of the non-payment of their salaries, and Mr. Kemble of course, as did others, withdrew his services till the pecuniary affairs of Drury were adjusted in the Court of Chancery to the satisfaction of all parties; when he and the other performers resumed their respective situations. In 1802 he visited the Continent, and passed a few months in the capitals of France and Spain. On his return in 1803, he succeeded Mr. Lewis in the stage management of Covent-garden theatre, in consequence of his purchase of the sixth share of that property.

There is a majesty of person in Mr. Kemble, which Nature has bestowed, as if she had particularly marked him for a votary of the histrionic art: his frame is so formed, that his stage drapery always decorates his person with a becoming elegance: had he been proportionably lusty to the size of his limbs, the graceful effect of his scenic habiliments would be much reduced; but being rather thin, his professional garments flow with all the beauty and ease that a tasteful fancy and classical mind can suggest, in their arrangement. For parts that require

dignity and strong expression, no man ever had features of a more happy cast; they powerfully describe all the great passions that belong to elevated life and superior sensibility, and possess a fixibility that strongly imprints what the soul feels and dictates. His eyes are large, of a brilliant lustre, and always have an appropriate motion to the movement of his features, when in their descriptive use. The form and majestic lineaments of Mr. Kemble's face are not calculated to express the ludicrous feelings of the Comic Muse; in parts therefore of a light, airy construction, he must always appear to great disadvantage.

His voice may be compared to that of Demosthenes, as related by Plutarch; which, though naturally defective, has been greatly improved in sweetness and expansion, and rendered powerfully effective by judicious care. As this gentleman laid the foundation of his present fame from the personification of Hamlet, we shall make it the first subject of our remark. In Mr. Kemble's assumption of the character, we forget the actor and see the Dane: every line of the part seems to have been analyzed and converted by him into the most perfect picture of human feeling, and rendered strongly productive of the auditor's sympathy for his interesting and affecting situation. Passing over several little beauties of delivery, in the first scene with the king and his mother, we come to the following soliloquy:

“ O, that this too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew !”

which he gives with such a richness of expression, that it at once rivets attention, and animates our faculties into the liveliest sense of his exquisite and peculiar gifts. There are also several

lines in the scene with Horatio, Bernardo, and Marcellus, that are finely pourtrayed: first, when he says,

“Methinks I see my father!”

And on Horatio’s observing,

“My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.”

the manner in which Mr. Kemble says,

“Saw! who?”

is an effort in scenic painting, of the first description. His manner of receiving his father’s ghost, displays a fine mixture of astonishment and resolution; and the reverence which he preserves in speaking these words—

“Go on, I’ll follow thee!”

exceeds the art of illustration.

There is a talent peculiar to this gentleman, which is strongly felt by an audience, but it is of a nature not easily described—a happiness of action and play of the features, which often convey the passions of a character more forcibly than the language of the poet; this art is theatrically called *bye-play*; and no one is more judicious in the display, or more successful in the use of it, than Mr. Kemble.

The gentlemanly sneer was never better displayed than when Kemble shews Guildenstern and Rosencratz, that the nature of their visit is not unknown to him, and laughs them into a confession of the motive for their coming. We confess we feel ourselves inadequate to give a just description of his features and action, when he addresses his visitors thus:

“Were you not sent for? Is it your own Inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, Come, deal justly with me: Come—nay, speak.”

Then again, when he resumes an energy of reflexion, with what exquisite dignity and feeling he gives that speech, in which the poet has so beautifully described our nature;

“What a piece of work is man!” &c.

There is a sublime importance imparted to this speech by his delivery of it, that never fails to rouse public sensibility into the utmost rigour of moral reflexion, which is manifested by repeated plaudits.

We cannot leave unnoticed his scene with the players, where he endeavours to recollect the speech he once heard, and which he wishes the Thespian hero to repeat, he displays a princely dignity, blended with a pleasing suavity of manners in his address to the actor, which is generally rewarded with public approbation.

His real tenderness for Ophelia, and his ineffectual endeavours to conceal it, are distinctions which he is as nice in conveying as the poet was in drawing. In the closet scene with his mother, he preserves a proper air of filial affection amidst the most bitter reproaches, until he gives way to the awe and surprize that must naturally arise from the re-appearance of the ghost; and here are so many finished touches of a great player, that to record them would occupy more pages than we can devote to Mr. Kemble's Hamlet; but among the many delicacies of his performance in this scene, we must notice one or two. On Polonius's calling for help, and on Hamlet's being worked up to a state of frenzy, he runs behinds the arras and destroys him; and on his return to the Queen, who in a state of great agitation says,

“What hast thou done?”

Ham. “Nay, I know not:—Is it the king?”

the convulsed motion of his frame at the time he asks this question, and the complication of distress, anger, and gratified revenge, with a belief that the king had fallen a proper sacrifice to his villany, are finely expressed by this tragedian—it is Kemble in all the perfection of art and taste. Again, when he exhibits his father's portrait, and compares the dead with the living monarch, he shows how inimitably well he has conceived his author, from the spirit and expression he gives to the text.

The ease and elegance this gentleman maintains in the scene with Osrick, is particularly fine and impressive: we therefore select one of the many little delicacies of picture which accompany his interview with the fop, who says,

“ I mean, Sir, for his weapon.”

Hamlet inquires

“ What is his weapon ?”

Osrick. “ Rapier and dagger.”

Hamlet replies,

“ That's two of his weapons,”

with the utmost elegance of deportment, united also with a feature of scorn for the butterfly who has thrust himself into his company.

There are some portions of this character which many actors have delineated with a happy effect, but they have been frequently defective in keeping up the general dignity of the part. Mr. Kemble, however, never loses sight of his birth and elevated rank, and even shows the prince in the flourish of his rapier; and preserves a greatness of demeanour to the last moment of his existence.

We shall conclude our remarks on Mr.

Kemble's Hamlet in the language of Cibber:—"Pity it is," says that writer, "that the momentary beauties flowing from an harmonious elocution, cannot, like those of poetry, be their own record;--that the animated graces of the player can live no longer than the instant that breath and motion that presents them; or at best, can but faintly glimmer through the memory or imperfect attestation of a few surviving spectators."

Mr. Kemble's performance of Orestes, in the tragedy of the Distrest Mother, possesses a sublimity of feature which exceeds our ability to describe with accuracy; and is the *ne plus ultra* of the art. In the third scene of the fourth act, where Hermione shews the agony of disappointed love, and works on the feelings of Orestes to kill Pyhrrus, till he says,

"That were to make him blest; and me more
Wretched:—Have you a foe.
And shall I let him live? my rival too!
Ere yon meridian sun declines, he dies;
And you shall say, that I deserve your love."

It is impossible to bestow too much praise on the whole of this scene; but when he assumes the resolution to destroy Pyhrrus, after a long combat between love, honour, and ambition, (in which every passion of the soul is finely shewn) he delivers the above language with great majesty of action and beauty of expression; and so delicately softens the energy of his delivery in the last line, which expresses a hope that he shall deserve her love, that fills the auditor's mind with the utmost anxiety for his fate. In the second scene of the fifth act, he enters with an unsheathed sabre, and informs Hermione,

"Madam, 'tis done!—your orders are obey'd;
'The tyrant lies expiring at the altar."

And shortly after, she says in a paroxysm of rage,

“ I renounce
My friends, my country, Greece, and all mankind;
But chiefly, I renounce thee, monster! thee!”

These sentiments bring on a display of the passions in Orestes, that are difficult to describe; particularly when he looks, as it were, within his soul, and expresses, in a state of wonder and amazement—

“ Am I awake! Where am I!—Soft my soul,
Be not too rash. Was that Hermione?
Why should her anger thunder against me?
Was not the blood shed all by her command?”

He then begins to be alive to his degraded state, and beautifully gives a solemn and dignified pathos to the following passages:

“ I am, indeed, a most outrageous monster,
A ruffian, madman, a base assassin!
And all to please a false ungrateful woman.”

His mind instantly runs into a confused and hurried reflexion :

“ Henceforward let the laws of nations cease;
And let the pale, that severs right and wrong,
Things sacred and profane, be broken down;
Gods in their temples, kings upon their thrones,
Are not in safety, while Orestes lives.
Oh, never more shall my torn mind be healed,
Nor taste the gentle comforts of repose,
A dreadful band of gloomy cares surround me,
And lay strong siege to my distracted soul.”

This speech he gives with such a variety of feeling, and expresses each passage with so much energy, that the eye and mind of the spectator must be closely riveted, from the sublimity of his effort. On his companion Pylades informing him that Hermione had plunged the poniard in her breast, and lay grasping the body of her

favourite Phyrrihus in the agonies of death, he is particularly great in expressing the passions, in these lines:

“ I thank you, Gods! I never could expect
To be so wretched! you have been industrious
To finish your decrees; to make Orestes
A dreadful instance of your power to punish;
I am singled out to bear the wrath of Heaven.”

In his last scene, it is impossible to paint the grandeur and sublimity with which he exhibits the passions of his disordered intellect: all that the mind can picture to itself of a great soul under the affliction of strong but insulted love, united also to the murder of a monarch, for the illusive hope of Hermione's love, and the gratification of her who hated him, are given by Mr. Kemble with an excellence of delineation that cannot be approached by any actor on the stage.

His features, frame, indeed the whole man, takes a new form, and is completely twisted into a being agonized by the tortures to which human insanity is heir. With what solemn but majestic wildness does he give that speech, where he says,

“ Look where they come!
A shoal of furies!—how they swarm about!”

If Mr. Kemble were never to play another character, Orestes would immortalize him.

Biron, in the Fatal Marriage, is a dramatic portrait which has not been drawn with those great and striking qualities that shew Mr. Kemble to any advantage as its representative. It contains no variety of passion, and has a sameness of feature that does not give scope for extensive exertion; yet the feelings of the part seem to be well stamped on his mind from the judicious

use of his features, and the appropriate application of his attitudes; but still we consider his assumption of the unfortunate Biron, not among his most happy efforts.

His personification of the sick king, in the Second Part of King Henry the Fourth, is greatly entitled to praise. There are one or two lines, which he gives beyond all possible description. First, when led to his couch, he says,

“ Set me the crown upon my pillow, here.”

Here the ambition of his nature is finely exhibited, and his love of that diadem which he is every moment on the eve of quitting for ever. Mr. Kemble, in speaking this line, shews his great knowledge of nature. He is also great in the fifth scene, in giving these words :

“ Where is the crown?—Who took it from me?”

Many other parts of the character are finely pourtrayed by him, and evince the conception of a great actor.

There are various opinions with respect to his representation of Macbeth; but if considered comparatively, it must, we humbly think, be allowed at present beyond rivalship. There is no one now on the stage who is altogether so great in this difficult character as Mr. Kemble.

His Rolla is another part in which he stands alone; no one can infuse that dignity and feeling into the Peruvian, that he receives in the person of the above gentleman.

His performance of Richard III. is much inferior to Mr. Cooke's delineation of the ambitious king; and we think he shews his judgment in having assigned the character to that excellent performer.

He portrays the miseries of Beverly in the most natural colours, and never fails in this character to interest the feelings of his audience, and obtain an ample share of their applause.

His Othello is a performance replete with scenic beauty : he renders every passage effective, and displays the predominating passions of the character in most masterly tints.

It is not in consequence of Mr. Kemble's having been the original Octavian, that we consider him its most able representative ; but on a comparative view of all the supporters of the insane lover, there is no one who as yet has equalled Mr. Kemble's descriptive efforts.

His professional powers are shown to great advantage in Royal John, whose inquietude he delineates in the very first style of scenic excellence.

In comedy, Mr. Kemble is only great in a limited point of view. The light, airy cast of character very ill accords with either the construction of his features, his voice, or deportment. The common-place colloquy of his character in Morton's comedy of Town and Country, he is very defective in the management of ; but in the advanced stages of the drama, where his mind is called into reflexion, he supports his author with great success. He gives dignity to his pathos, and impresses the morality of his part with very forcible effect.

It is in characters like Penruddock, in the Wheel of Fortune, that this gentleman is most happy, when he treads the stage under the influence of the Comic Muse. Cumberland wrote the above character with a perfect knowledge of all the peculiar qualities which con-

stitute Mr. Kemble's professional excellencies, and it is almost unnecessary to observe, that his Penruddock cannot be equalled.

Viewing his representation of Lord Townly, in the Provoked Husband, upon the whole, it is but indifferent; but in the admonitory parts of the character he does great justice to his author.

With these reflexions on Mr. Kemble's talents, we take leave of him for the present, as the greatest ornament of the British stage.

KEMBLE, STEPHEN—Brother to the subject of the preceding article, was put apprentice to an apothecary, but stimulated by the example of John, and his sisters, then on the stage, sought for theatrical glory in an itinerant company. After performing at different towns in England, he was engaged at the Little Theatre, Capel-street, Dublin, where he appeared in the character of Shylock. Mr. Harris wishing to anticipate the designs of his rival managers of Drury-lane, who had made overtures to Mr. John Kemble, dispatched a secret messenger to Dublin, who having mistaken the two brothers, engaged Stephen for Covent-garden theatre, at which house he made his *entré* in Othello, in 1783. Mr. Kemble became afterwards a member of the Hay-market company, and played Sir Christopher Curry, in Inkle and Yarico, besides a variety of other characters, with applause; but in consequence of becoming manager of the Edinburgh and Newcastle theatres, he relinquished his London engagement. Here he was opposed by Mrs. Esten, who laid claim to the management of the Edinburgh theatre. At that time she was separated from Mr. Esten, who having been much involved, signed articles of

separation from his wife in 1789, to which he was induced by ~~his~~ mother-in-law, who on that condition furnished him with the means of escaping from his creditors.

This lady having found a protector in the Duke of Hamilton, Mr. Esten, on his return, brought an action against his Grace for criminal intercourse with his wife, but was *nonsuited*. Through the kindness of his Grace, and other friends, she endeavoured to supplant Mr. Kemble, but finding him too powerfully supported, particularly by the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, she relinquished her pretensions for a valuable consideration, and Mr. Kemble obtained the management.

In October 1803, he made his first appearance at Drury-lane, in the character of Falstaff, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, which was preceded by an introductory address, written by himself, and spoken by Mr. Bannister; and though this gentleman's performance, according to the opinion of old and able critics, was not equal to Henderson's representation of the fat knight, yet he understood the text of his author, and delivered it with some humour. From the approbation he met with on this occasion, he offered himself in the same character in *Henry the Fourth*, in which he also obtained the approbation of the public.

Mr. Stephen Kemble married Miss Satchell, who was the daughter of a musical instrument maker to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. This lady made her first appearance on Covent-garden stage in 1780, in *Polly*, in the *Beggar's Opera*, which she repeated several nights with distinguished applause. She then performed several characters in tragedy, parti-

cularly Adelaide, in the Count of Narbonne, with great success; and in a short time she became a valuable acquisition to the theatre, in tragedy, comedy, and opera. On Mr. Stephen Kemble's first appearance in Othello, she performed Desdemona. A mutual attachment soon took place, and with the consent of their relations, they were married.

On Mr. Stephen Kemble's being discharged, she left Covent-garden, and was engaged at the Hay-market theatre in 1786. Here she performed ten summer seasons, and relinquished her engagement in consequence of her husband becoming the manager of the Edinburgh theatre, where she has been till within these twelve months, a much admired performer. It is reported, that since Mr. Kemble has sold, or assigned his right in the above property to the late Mr. Jackson, neither himself nor wife have played, and that they now reside in Yorkshire, on a handsome fortune.

Their daughter is a great favourite on the Newcastle boards: she is a pleasing actress, as well as an excellent singer.

KEMBLE, CHARLES—Was born in November, 1775, at Brecknock in South Wales, a town distinguished by being the birth-place of his sister, Mrs. Siddons. At a very early age he was sent by his brother John to the college of Douay, in Flanders, where he continued five years, and returned with those acquirements that would have facilitated his progress in any of the learned professions. He, however, accepted a situation in the Post-office, the duties of which he soon found irksome; and as the salary was inconsiderable, he left it in the course of a twelvemonth, and turned his attention to

his present profession. With little previous preparation, he commenced his career at Sheffield, in the year 1792, in the character of Orlando, in which we have been assured that he acquitted himself with considerable credit; he oftentimes performed at Newcastle and Edinburgh, and the encouragement he received in the country induced him to return to town, and try the candour of a London audience. He accordingly appeared at Drury-lane in the winter of 1794, in the character of Malcolm, in *Macbeth*; and though these parts gave him the benefit of experience, yet they could not afford him an opportunity of distinguishing himself. In consequence of the indisposition of Mr. John Kemble, and during the run of the opera of *Mahmoud*, he was called upon to supply his brother's place at a very short notice, and he performed the character in a very respectable manner, and obtained the approbation of the house. He shortly after appeared in *George Barnwell*, in which character he displayed considerable dramatic powers; and his personification of Alonzo, in *Pizarro*, again added to his professional reputation.

About seven years ago he adapted the *Deserteur* of Mercier, to the English stage; which performance evinced much literary ability: it was represented at the Hay-market theatre, with great success. During his engagement at Colman's house, he performed a variety of characters, with satisfaction to the town.

He has been twice on the Continent since he became a public character. His first visit was to Germany, where it is said he collected a great number of the most favourite plays in that

country, which a few years back were quite the rage of an English audience. His next journey was to Petersburg, where he continued several months.

He joined his brother at Covent-garden in 1803, where he continues to exert his talents occasionally in the first walks of the drama, with high honour to himself and satisfaction to the public.

KEMBLE, Mrs. C. (late Miss THERESA DECAMP) — This amiable woman and celebrated performer, was born in the city of Vienna, the capital of Austria. Her parents were persons of respectability, and her father, it is said, was descended of noble blood. Music, in which Mr. Decamp excelled, became, from various causes, his profession; and his talents were highly flattered both in Germany and England: yet fortune was not very munificent in rewarding his labours. Thus unpleasantly situated, Mrs. Decamp saw the necessity of exerting herself and family for their mutual support and comfort. Little Theresa, the eldest of her children, abounding in both mental and personal advantages, and displaying them with every youthful grace, was, at the age of six, placed on the stage of the Opera-house, to sustain the parts of Cupids, and other fairy personages, in the ballets of that Armidean palace. Here her agile powers attracted the attention, and obtained the admiration of that portion of the wealthy and enlightened public, who are the support of the King's Theatre.

The fashionable theatre of Mons. Le Texier, made every endeavour to possess the exertions

of this little elegant creature, and after repeated solicitations, she performed in the most interesting manner, the sweet Zelia of Madaine de Genlis. She also danced at the Circus, and by the recommendation of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, was engaged by Mr. Colman for the Little Theatre in the Hay-market. Her first appearance there was made in the ballet of *Jamie's Return*. Her Royal Patron was delighted with her performance, and continued his approbation of her rising talents, as they dawned through the various characters of the Prince of Wales, in *Richard the Third*; the Page, in the *Orphan*; and other youthful performances, which unfolded her genius, and gradually established her name.

At the age of twelve she was engaged by Mr. King, at Drury-lane; but the joy that accompanied her elevation was soon checked, by the death of her father, who had left a young wife, a son, and three daughters, almost entirely dependant on the salary of Miss Theresa Decamp. She was introduced to the public in the character of Julie, in the opera of *Richard Cœur de Lion*, and gave an able specimen of those powers which have since ripened to perfection, and afforded such general delight. But to prepare herself for that variety of character to which her ambition aspired, she found it necessary to go through a regular course of studies of that description which were best calculated to show the gifts of Nature to the utmost advantage, in those varied walks of the drama in which her professional powers might be called into action. With this resolution, the deportment of her person became one of the subjects of her sedulous attention, which, under

the direction of D'Egville and Laborie, was soon brought obedient to every rule of grace, from the finest examples of the antique figure. Of mental accomplishments we mention music and singing, which she acquired under the best masters, and by her proficiency in these two arts, she gradually got possession of all the avenues that led to the most prominent characters. She acquired her knowledge of the English, French, and Italian languages, under the immediate auspices of several ladies of rank. The accomplished Viscountess Perceval was one of these fostering teachers. The late Duchess of Argyle honoured Miss Decamp with her patronage, and often received her at Argyle-house, where she displayed her imitative talents to the delight of her noble and elegant patrons.

With a mind so extraordinarily gifted, and being mistress of every accomplishment, it is not surprizing that Miss Decamp became a favourite of the public. For many seasons we remember her at Drury-lane and the Hay-market, supporting the drama in all its opposite shades. In comedy, opera, farce, or ballet, all came alike to her: there was no comparative excellence; she excelled in every part she assumed; whether she sang, danced, or delivered a sentiment, she was equally at home, and afforded the highest satisfaction to her audience. The fatigues which accompanied her professional duties for several seasons, injured her health, and by the advice of her physicians, she went to France during the late peace; and after a few months residence in the neighbourhood of Paris, she returned convalescent.

It appears that towards the latter part of her

engagement at Drury-lane, she felt herself disappointed in not having the possession of a particular line of character in elegant comedy, to which she considered her talents and long and faithful services entitled her. Under an impression of neglect, she left Drury-lane at the conclusion of the season of 1806-7, for Covent-garden, where she commenced her engagement on terms highly flattering to her talents.

An attachment of an honourable nature had subsisted between Mr. Charles Kemble and this charming woman for several years, and after she had signed articles with Messrs. Harris and Kemble, she gave her hand to Mr. C. Kemble, who unites, in the accomplished gentleman, an unimpeachable character, and great professional ability. To Mrs. C. Kemble's tuition and influence, her only brother, Mr. Vincent Decamp, is indebted for his present engagement at Drury-lane theatre. She obtained a similar situation for her sister Adelaide, in the North of England, where she played many seasons with great success; and is now engaged at Covent-garden theatre with her exemplary sister.

KENNEDY, Mrs.—This celebrated singer was the wife of Dr. Kennedy, of Rathbone-place; and at one time much distinguished on the boards of Covent-garden and the Hay-market. She had a powerful voice, which was under the management of a fine ear and a good understanding. She frequently assumed male characters with considerable success, and was the original representative of Patrick, in the *Poor Soldier*, in 1783. She introduced to the public, on two of her benefit nights, her niece,

Miss Reynolds, who afterwards performed *Arbaces*, in *Artaxerxes*, at Covent-garden.

KENNY, Mr.—This gentleman ought, according to the arrangement of our materials, to have come in a preceding part of this work, but through mistake, we are under the necessity of giving him a niche among the performers. He is said to be a native of Ireland, and author of some poems, &c. His first dramatic production was an excellent farce, called *Raising the Wind*, which was brought out at Covent-garden theatre in 1803. The plot of the farce is an exceeding good one, and well conducted; the incidents are judiciously arranged, which, together with an appropriate dialogue, constitute a very laughable and interesting little drama. In the following year he brought out a musical farce, founded on the French, called *Matrimony*, which was performed for a considerable time, with the merited approbation of the public. During the present season, 1806-7, an opera, in three acts, entitled *False Alarms*, made its appearance under his name, and though it certainly does not possess the interest of either of the former pieces, yet it is not void of merit, and has been represented on successive evenings with considerable applause. It is reported that Mr. Kenny is a gentleman of a very accomplished mind and elegant manners.

LACEY, WILLOUGHBY—This gentleman was formerly one of the proprietors of Drury-lane theatre. His father, who had been joint purchaser with Mr. Garrick, died January 3, 1774, and left his property to this son, who continued

to carry on the business of the stage in great harmony with his father's old friend and partner, Mr. Garrick. Garrick having retired from the stage in 1776, his share was purchased by Messrs. Sheridan, Linley, and Dr. Ford, and these partners soon after came into possession of Mr. Lacey's share. This gentleman has been for many years much embarrassed, and has generally an annual benefit at the theatre, when he performs a principal character himself. He lost his wife Jan. 11, 1788, and the year following was married to Miss Jackson. His son has attempted the stage, and played Hamlet at Covent-garden theatre for a benefit in 1801. He has since fitted up a theatre at St. Neot's, where he has a company.

LEAK, Miss—Is a native of Norfolk, where her father followed the occupation of farming. Having lost her parents when very young, she was brought up under the care of an uncle and aunt. She was first instructed in music by Mr. Sharp, of the above city; and in 1792, came to London, and was articled to Dr. Arnold. Her first public essay was in a concert at Freemason's Hall, and her success, though only fourteen years of age, induced the Doctor to bring his pupil forward the succeeding season at the Hay-market theatre, in the character of Rosetta, in *Love in a Village*, which she repeated with the most flattering encouragement. She performed other characters with equal approbation, and in the winter following, assisted in the oratorios at the opening of the new Drury-lane theatre, where she was immediately engaged for three years, and supported several of Signora Storace's characters with great credit.

She also played three seasons at Mr. Colman's theatre, and afterwards exerted her abilities at Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, &c. with success. Her voice lately failing, she retired from the stage, and now lives by teaching music.

LEGER, Mrs. ST.—This charming woman is a native of Ireland, and the daughter of a performer of the name of Williams, who gave her a very good education.

She appeared early in life on the Dublin stage, and from her many personal perfections, soon became the object of general notice and admiration. She unites to all the graces of a fine form, a beautiful cast of features, and a mind extremely strong and enlarged. While she was the idol of the above stage, it is said that she possessed a voice enchantingly melodious, but that severe indisposition has weakened its powers.

Mrs. St. Leger made her *debut* on the Covent-garden boards in the season of 1799, as Alicia, in the tragedy of Jane Shore, and was received with the most flattering tokens of public approbation. She afterwards sustained the part of Calista, in the Fair Penitent, with considerable success. Her talents, however, were not employed for several seasons in their proper sphere, and in the trifling business assigned to her, she could not show herself. She has since emerged from her obscurity, and shown the versatility of her scenic powers in a variety of opposite parts, both in the regular drama, and in pantomimic spectacles.

As an actress, Mrs. St. Leger has many claims to our notice: though the characters she at present personifies are not of much importance, yet

she gives her author with becoming propriety, and attaches great interest to the parts entrusted to her care. Mariana, in *Measure for Measure*, is a part of no great consequence, but when accompanied with her elegance of action and justness of delineation, it carries no ordinary degree of importance. The Queen, in *Hamlet*, has become a more prominent portrait of Shakespeare's pencil since it has been assigned to her support. She sustained Queen Elizabeth, in *Mary Queen of Scots*, with appropriate dignity, and drew an ample share of public approbation to all her scenes. There are many other characters which sufficiently display her capability for the support of business of a superior description to what she has hitherto assumed.

LEE LEWES, CHARLES—This performer was the son of a hosier, who lived in Bond-street many years, but was afterwards employed as a letter-carrier in the Post-office. The son frequently acted as his father's deputy, but being attached to the stage, he joined a strolling company, and after experiencing the vicissitudes of an itinerant life for a few years, obtained a situation at Covent-garden theatre. Though engaged to do the duty of Harlequin only, he performed characters of importance, and at length undertaking the part of Young Marlow, in *She Stoops to Conquer*, he established his fame; and on the death of Mr. Woodward, in 1776, he became one of the principal comedians of the above theatre.

When Mr. Lewis, now of Covent-garden, was engaged, the subject of this article added his second Christian name, *Lee*, in order to distinguish

the two performers. Carried away by the tide of success, he resigned his situation in consequence of some trifling difference with the manager. In 1783 he obtained a situation at Drury-lane, but not having the opportunities he had previously enjoyed of displaying his abilities, his stay was of short duration. He occasionally delivered Stevens's celebrated Lecture on Heads, with considerable applause. He assisted Palmer at the Royalty Theatre, and on the failure of that unprofitable scheme, went to the East-Indies with his family, but was still unsuccessful in his speculations. On his return he visited Scotland, and was in Dublin 1792-3, where he was a favourite in low comedy. He was remarkable for his repartees, but it is said many of his jests were made for him. While at the Royalty Theatre he recited the famous ballad of Johnny Gilpin; but not having created that merriment among his audience which he expected, he came off the stage disgusted with Gilpin, declaring he would give his Lecture on Heads the next night instead of it. A friend observed to him, that if he had worn a comical citizen's wig, and thrown it off when he was describing Gilpin's fall from his horse, he would have made the people laugh. "My dear Sir (replied Lee Lewes), "it is not *wigs* that people want now-a-days, but *heads*."

To relieve him from an embarrassed state in which he was involved, Mr. Harris generously gave him the free use of his theatre on the closing of the season of 1803, and Mrs. Jordan, Mr. Townsend, &c. gave their services in the comedy of *The Wonder*, which produced him a handsome pecuniary assistance.

A few weeks after his benefit, he was found dead in his bed, and was buried at Pentonville. His life has been since published in three volumes, 12mo.

LEONI, Mr.—Was a Jew, and a singer of great repute in his day. He made his first appearance at Covent-garden in 1775, in the character of Arbaces, in Artaxerxes; and for several years continued a great favourite with the public. He joined Giordani in the management of an English Opera-house in Dublin; but though they met with considerable encouragement, the partners became bankrupts, owing probably to some imprudent engagements they had made. He was also one of the several performers who were engaged by the late Mr. Palmer for the Royalty Theatre. It is said he died in the West-Indies.

LEWIS, WILLIAM THOMAS—This highly respectable private character, and celebrated comedian, was born at Ormskirk, in Lancashire, in the year 1748. His grandfather, the Rev. Price Lewis, was Rector of Traghair, in Glamorganshire, and second son of Erasmus Lewis, Esq. Private Secretary to Mr. Harley, Minister to Queen Anne, and the confidential friend of Pope and Swift, and whose name appears so often in their correspondence. His father, Mr. William Lewis, served his time to a linen-draper on Tower-hill, but disliking the mechanical routine of business, as soon as his apprenticeship expired, he quitted the counter for the stage, and at length became joint-proprietor of a company of comedians in Ireland, with Mr. Love, of Drury-lane. He performed in Dublin at the same time with Mr.

Garrick, under the direction of the then manager, Mr. Sheridan.

In 1759, the subject of this article was sent to Ireland, and educated at a grammar school at Armagh, where he made great proficiency in his studies, and by his early acquaintance with the classics, imbibed those correct and genuine principles of taste which may be considered as the ground-work of his subsequent advancement.

Almost immediately on leaving school, he went on the stage, and early distinguished himself at Edinburgh, under the management of Mr. Digges. When not quite 20, he sustained the character of Belcour, in the *West-Indian*, and his performance of that sprightly and eccentric character drew the public to the Little Theatre, Capel-street, where he was engaged in opposition to Mr. Mossop, who attempted the same part at the rival theatre in Crow-street. So marked and decisive, however, was the preference given to Mr. Lewis, that Mossop found himself obliged to decline the contest, and leave our hero in possession of the character. Mr. Cumberland was so pleased with his exquisite personification of it, that he declared he should never rest satisfied till Covent garden theatre was in possession of so valuable an acquisition.

Fortunately for Lewis, Macklin was in Dublin, where he was performing, and on his return to England, made so favourable a report of him to Mr. Colman, then manager of Covent-garden, that he immediately sent for him. Mr. Lewis accordingly made his *debut* on the metropolitan boards in Belcour, Oct. 13, 1773, in which he fully answered the expectations of the manager. The next character in which he came

forward before a London audience, was *Posthumus*, in *Cymbeline*; his performance of which also raised him very much in public favour. The same season Mr. Colman allotted him a principal part in his new comedy of *The Man of Business*, which received considerable support from his exertions. From this time he continued gradually rising in the estimation of the public; succeeding first by the indisposition, and afterwards by the deaths of Mr. Barry and of Mr. Woodward, to their principal characters, which he performed from the year 1776 to 1782, when he became deputy-manager of Covent-garden theatre, in consequence of the resignation of the venerable Mr. Hull. The length of time he filled this arduous and critical office, forms the most honourable proof of his good conduct, impartiality, and scrupulous attention to the interests of the theatre; and we believe there never was a manager who possessed the general regard and good-will of the profession in a more eminent degree; at the same time, that he made no unjust sacrifices to popularity, by compromising the interests of the proprietors.

The arduous office of stage-manager, which he had held for upwards of twenty years, he resigned in 1803 to Mr. Kemble. Mr. Lewis has several children; his eldest son went out to India, with recommendations equal to any ever sent from this country, and which, to the credit of the father and the son, were voluntarily given. He has also a son on the stage, who has acquired professional reputation in various country theatres; and he performed at Covent-garden several nights in the season 1805-6, with some success.

As an actor, Mr. Lewis is at present unequalled in the line of character which he assumes: his personification of Belcour, Ranger, Vapid, Tanjore, Rapid, Sir Charles Racket, Goldfinch, Mercutio, and the Copper Captain, may justly be pronounced *chef d'œuvres* in the histrionic art.

In private life Mr. Lewis is also entitled to respect and admiration, from uniting all the qualities which distinguish the names of a man of honour and a gentleman.

LISTON, Mr.—This very excellent comedian is of a respectable family, and very well educated. He was once master of the Library School in Castle-street, Leicester-square. In this situation he continued but a short time, but previous to his quitting his preceptorship, he occasionally performed for persons who take benefits in the winter at the Little Theatre in the Hay-market. On his leaving the avocation of a school-master, he for some time encountered all the difficulties attendant on a stroller's life. His general and favourite cast of character was heroes in tragedy. With a mind full of ardour, he pursued his professional course in various country companies, and at last was engaged at the Dublin theatre, where he continued some time as a second-rate tragedian, and a useful performer.

He was afterwards engaged by Mr. Stephen Kemble. In this gentleman's company, it is said, he discovered that he had mistaken his *forte*, and that under the influence of Thalia he had every prospect of becoming a favourite with the public. He now began to assume old men, country boys, and a variety of characters which belong to that department of the drama which is termed low comedy. At Edinburgh, New-

castle, and other towns within Mr. Kemble's circuit, he rapidly increased in public estimation as a comedian of great and original talents. His fame soon reached Mr. Colman, who received him at the Hay-market in 1805, where he made his appearance in *Shcepface*, in the *Village Lawyer*. His success in this part introduced him to the public in a variety of similar characters, all of which he personified in the very first style of excellence. The celebrity that he acquired at the summer theatre led to his introduction at Covent-garden, where the proprietors considered his talents might be employed to their mutual advantage. He accordingly made his *entré* on the boards of the above house Oct. 15, 1805, in the part of Jacob Gawkey, in the *Chapter of Accidents*; and his performance fully evinced that he possessed powers not very common to the English stage.

Among the number of performers that are ushered into public notice in the course of a season, very few indeed possess any genuine qualities for the profession of which they have become enamoured. Mr. Liston, however, is an exception. His talents are distinguished by many original peculiarities, that render his delineation of countrymen highly interesting. He copies no one, and delights in all the parts he assumes. His performance of rustics is rich in simplicity, without that extravagance with which the generality of actors too often colour their pastoral characters. In old men we must confess he is not quite so happy. If Grizzle, in *Tom Thumb*, may however be ranked under the above term, his performance of it is a most excellent piece of acting. On the whole, he

deserves to be considered one of the great players of the present day.

As a private individual, it is said he is highly respectable for his gentlemanly and moral demeanour. He very lately married Miss Tyrer, of Covent-garden theatre, who is not only a very interesting actress and delightful singer, but a very amiable and virtuous woman.

LITCHFIELD, Mrs.—This much-esteemed actress was born on the 4th of March, 1777. Her father, Mr. John Silvester Hay, the only child of a clergyman, who held the living of Maldon, in Essex, was surgeon of the Nassau East-India-man, and afterwards head surgeon of the Royal Hospital at Calcutta, in Bengal.

At a very early period of her life she discovered a passion for theatricals, which increased so strongly with her years, that the opposition which her friends made to the darling object of her fancy, had no effect. It is said, that the first performance which made any particular impression on her feelings, was Mrs. Siddons's *Isabella*.

In the summer of 1792, Mrs. Litchfield first offered herself to public notice on the Richmond stage, in the character of Julia, in the *Surrender of Calais*, and her performance produced every token of public gratification. Mrs. Jordan was present at her first dramatic essay, and manifested her high approbation of this lady's exertions.

From the encouragement she met with on her first appearance, she sustained three or four other characters on the same boards in the course of the season, which evinced powers that would be at a future period ornamental to one of the Lon-

don theatres. In the early part of the year 1793 she accepted an engagement in Scotland, where she did not remain quite a year; but during her stay at Glasgow and Dumfries, she became a favourite, particularly at the latter place, where she gave so much satisfaction, that after her return to London she received a letter from Burns, the celebrated Scottish poet, requesting, in the name of the inhabitants of Dumfries, that she would pay them a second visit; but this solicitation was not complied with.

In the course of a few months after her Northern excursion, Mr. Aickin engaged her for Liverpool, with a promise of every encouragement to render her happy and popular; but she had not been long a resident in that town, before she became dissatisfied with Mr. Aickin's conduct. During the whole of the season she performed but two characters, Sophia, in the *Road to Ruin*, and Edward, in *Every One has his Fault*. For the temporary possession of these characters, Mrs. Litchfield was indebted to the kindness of Mr. Mattocks, the treasurer of the theatre, who had a just sense of the oppression and insult she had experienced; and being soon disgusted with the treatment of Mr. Aickin, she returned to London before the end of the season.

A short time after this unprofitable expedition, she married Mr. Litchfield, a gentleman well known and admired in the literary world, and much esteemed as a private character. All thoughts of the stage were then abandoned by this lady for several months, till Mrs. Davenport, of Covent-garden theatre, requested Mrs. Litchfield to perform the character of Edward, in the

play before mentioned, for her benefit, which solicitation was acceded to, and her personification of the character drew the plaudits of a crowded house. This unexpected success renewed with double vigour the almost exhausted passion that first brought her into public life.

In the spring of 1797, Mr. Harris engaged Mrs. Litchfield for three years, to commence the following season; but, for the advantage of stage experience, she performed several parts for the benefit of different performers, and added much to her reputation, and the increase of her income on the Richmond stage.

Mrs. Litchfield made her regular *entré* at Covent-garden theatre in the character of Marianne, in the Dramatist; and we may venture to state, without any exaggeration, that her representation of the part evinced the possession of very superior talents. In the summer of 1800 she was very successful at Birmingham, in all the first characters in tragedy. The ensuing season Mrs. Litchfield brought herself into great notice by her correct delineation of Lady Macbeth; it was in the above part that she established herself as a first-rate actress.

When the tragedy of Alfonso was put into rehearsal, this lady received the part of Otilia, a character composed of so many dangerous ingredients, that the success of the piece depended in a considerable degree on the art of the representative. Mrs. Litchfield's assumption of the character was so highly satisfactory to Mr. Lewis, the author, that he complimented her performance in very handsome terms, and acknowledged the benefit the play received from her exertions. On the expiration of her engagement at Covent-garden, Mr. Harris pro-

posed a renewal for three years more, on advanced terms, which was accepted. In 1801 she was engaged by Mr. Colman for the Haymarket theatre, where she only remained one season, as the arrangements of the house did not afford her any opportunity of displaying her abilities.

At the expiration of her second engagement at Covent-garden, she withdrew herself, from a difference which is said to have taken place between Mr. Harris and herself. She was, however, re-engaged to perform with Master Betty, and represented all heroines in the higher walks of the serious drama with great applause and satisfaction to the public.

During the present season 1803-7, Mrs. Litchfield has not been engaged at either of the theatres; we however think her talents are of a description that ought to place her in no indifferent situation in one of the houses; and we hope to see her next season resume her professional duties in London, with her merited success.

In private life her manners are cheerful and unaffected; she has had several children, of whom the eldest and last only survive.

LOWE, THOMAS—Was a singer of some celebrity in his day. He made his first appearance at Drury-lane theatre in September, 1740, in the part of Sir John Loverule, in the *Devil to Pay*, and soon afterwards in Captain Macheath, which character he supported with peculiar ease and spirit. On the opening of Rockholt-house, a place of entertainment, he was employed as a principal singer; after which he engaged at

Vauxhall, where he continued upwards of twenty seasons.

His engagement at Covent-garden lasted as long a period; but on Mr. Beard's becoming manager of that theatre, Mr. Lowe quitted it for Drury-lane, where he was, in a short time, supplanted by Mr. Vernon. He then took Marybone-gardens, and brought out Miss Catley as one of his vocal assistants. The first season was exceedingly successful, but a wet ensuing summer washed away all his good fortune, and he was soon afterwards reduced to great distress. Hereupon he took the Wells at Otter's Pool, near Watford, in Hertfordshire, and made other successful attempts to procure a comfortable livelihood.

When Mr. King purchased the property of Sadler's Wells, his natural liberality suggested to him that he might here find a situation for his friend Tom Lowe. Accordingly an engagement was offered to him at the Wells, where he continued to gain an easy income without injury to his reputation. Notwithstanding he was between twenty and thirty years in the receipt of an income little less than 1000*l.* per annum, yet he constantly dissipated the whole of it, and in the decline of life became an object of charity. He died March the 2d, 1783.

MACREADY, WILLIAM—This performer is a native of Dublin, and was bred to the business of an upholsterer by his father, who carries on that trade there to a considerable extent. He left this business for the stage, and having performed on the Irish boards, was in Mr. Daly's company when Mr. Macklin paid his last visit

to Ireland. Desirous of appearing in his own comedy of the *Man of the World*, he allotted the character of Egerton to Mr. Daly; but as he gave his instructions too harshly, the manager resigned the part to Macready, who paid such attention to the author, and performed the character so much to his satisfaction, that he procured him an engagement at Covent-garden; where he made his first appearance in *Flutter*, in the *Belle's Stratagem*, in 1786. He afterwards became manager at Birmingham; and having left Covent-garden in consequence of a disagreement about salary, opened the *Royalty Theatre* on the plan of *Sadler's Wells*, for the winter. This scheme proved unsuccessful, and he then undertook the management of *Sheffield theatre*.

His company at Birmingham generally consists of the best performers belonging to the London theatres.

As a performer, Mr. Macready only ranks among the useful. He is one of those players who are necessary in minor parts of the drama, but one who, when seen, makes no impression, and when absent, is not missed or inquired after. He is the author of the following pieces: *The Irishman in London*, farce, acted at Covent-garden 1792; and the *Bank Note; or, Lessons for Ladies*, comedy, altered from *Taverner*, 1799.

MARA, Madame GERTRUDE ELIZABETH—Her maiden name was Scheneling. She was the daughter of a respectable musician at Hesse-Cassel, who having been engaged to play at concerts both in London and in that country, brought her to England. Here she gave early

and astonishing specimens of her musical abilities. She accompanied her father to Italy and Germany; and her first appearance on the public stage was in the opera at Berlin, where she attracted the notice, and received the patronage of Frederick, King of Prussia; and at this time she became the wife of Mr. Mara. Desirous of visiting Italy, she made known her intention to Frederick, who gave strict orders to prevent her from leaving his dominions. She was therefore obliged to make use of artifice. A large harpsichord, of which she was very fond, seemed to the King a security for its mistress; but under pretence of having it repaired, she ordered it to be removed, and instead of having it brought back to her own house, sent it out of the kingdom, and immediately followed it, having told the officer who stopped her, that the King had changed his mind: "Here is his permission," (said she) "in which he has given me leave to go;" producing a letter from the Great Frederick, but of a very different purport from what it was represented; and the officer knowing her influence at Court, did not presume to read more than the signature. Having thus escaped, she went to Italy, and was present at the Carnival in 1783, whence she came to England.

Her first appearance on our stage was in 1788, at Drury-lane, in the part of Mandane, in the opera of Artaxerxes, for the benefit of Mr. Kelly, with whom she had been acquainted in Italy and Germany; and her success was so great, that she was engaged to perform six nights that season. In 1791-2, when the Drury-lane company were performing at the Opera-house, in the Hay-market, while the new

theatre was building, she was engaged for Hoare's serious opera of *Dido*.

For several seasons afterwards, she represented many of the principal characters in English opera, at the Dublin theatre; and having practised in that school with much success, was engaged by Mr. Harris in 1797. Her representation of *Polly*, in the *Beggar's Opera*, gave great satisfaction: though entirely different from that of Mrs. Billington, it was not less captivating. She sang the airs with the utmost simplicity, and scarcely even called in the aid of a *shake* or a flourish. Her husband, it is said, died lately at Berlin, and she has since resided in the neighbourhood of *Petersburgh*.

MAKIN, Mrs.—This lady is a native of *Hastings*, in *Sussex*, where her husband kept an inn. At his death she came into the possession of a sufficient income to support her genteelly. An attachment, however, to the stage, induced her to quit the repose of private life for the caprice of public favor; and she accordingly performed at different provincial theatres, with more than ordinary success. A few seasons ago, she appeared for the benefit of Mrs. Sontley, at *Drury-lane*, in the part of *Elvira*, in *Pizarro*; and it is said she gave proof of very promising talents.

In October 1806, Mrs. Makin made her regular *debut* in the part of *Queen Elizabeth*, in *Richard III.*; but, what with fear, and the news of her child's death, which happened a day or two previous to her appearance, she was not seen to the best advantage: it would be therefore unhandsome to make her effort the subject of critical remark. From what cause, we are not acquainted, she has not since appeared before the

public. Her figure is well formed and majestic, and her features are expressive and handsome; her voice is also powerful and melodious; and, we doubt not that if her talents were to have a fair trial, now her mind has returned to its wonted composure, she would be found very useful to the theatre. Her connexions are said to be highly respectable, and her private character is without a blemish.

MARA, Mr.—Is a native of Ireland, where, it is said, he received a good education. He has been several years on the stage, and principally engaged in small country companies. In the early part of the present season, 1806-7, he obtained permission of Mr. Harris to try his comic powers on the Covent-garden boards, in the character of Dennis Brulgruddery, in the comedy of John Bull; and that kindness which is ever manifested by an English audience to a first attempt, was extended to him. In consequence, therefore, of a favourable reception, he was engaged.

He afterwards assumed the part of Dooney Maſtwoiter, in *The Wags of Windsor*; but his effort did little or nothing for his fame; and the public shewed their disapprobation of his performance, when in the execution of a song which is highly pleasing from the mouth of Johnstone. It would, however, be unfair to view his merits comparatively with the talents of Mr. Johnstone; as there is no man in the kingdom, who can at all approach his richness of delineation. But, considering Mr. Mara's imitative powers without a reference to any performer, he evidently does not appear calculated to excel in the first walk of the Irish character. He has not studied his

authors with proper attention; and he does not give their language with any richness of colouring. His dialogue appears forced, and harsh, and shews a person labouring to be whimsical.

Though he will not be highly valuable to Mr. Harris in the principal business of his theatre, he yet may be found very useful in the minor parts of the drama.

MARRIOT, Miss—This lady made her *debut* at Covent-garden in *Clarinda*, in the *Suspicious Husband*, in 1802. She has since performed several other characters with a moderate share of success. Neither her figure, nor voice, are unpleasing; but her talents are not of a description to give her an eminence in the drama.

MARTYR, Mrs.—This lady, whose maiden name was Thornton, and who died on the 7th of June, 1807, made her first public appearance at Vauxhall, and afterwards was engaged at Covent-garden, where she came out in the part of Rosetta, in *Love in a Village*, in which she at once established her reputation as an actress and singer.

Being a neat breeches-figure, she soon got possession of that cast of female parts where the disguise of male attire is necessary; and for many years distinguished herself as a very interesting actress. Soon after her engagement at Covent-garden she married Captain Martyr, who died in the King's-bench prison. Her daughter, having been previously instructed in music by Madame Mara, has appeared on the stage; but does not seem to inherit one spark of her late mother's talents.

MATHEWS, CHARLES—This performer was

born in the year 1776, and is the son of the late Mr. Mathews, a bookseller in the Strand. It is said, that he received his education at Merchant-taylor's School, and that he became enamoured of the stage by reading plays, which he had not previously seen represented, in consequence of his father's religious objections to theatrical amusements.

At an evening school in the Strand, where young Mathews was acquiring a knowledge of the French language, private plays were proposed, and he eagerly joined in the desire of his school-fellows, that they should get up a play.

The Distressed Mother was accordingly performed, in the first-floor of a pastry-cook's shop in the Strand, where our hero made his *debut* in the part of Phoenix. In the following winter he exerted his juvenile efforts in the Orphan.

By this time his mind was too much inflamed with the imaginary honours of a theatrical life, to think of any future pursuit but that of a player; he consequently embraced every opportunity of either performing himself, or of seeing dramatic representations. Having seen Mr. Parsons personify Old Doiley, in *Who's the Dupe?* he fixed upon that cast of character, as the one most congenial to his inclination, and physical endowments.

He made his regular *debut* at Richmond in the autumn of 1793, in the characters of Richmond, in *Richard III.* and Bowkitt, in the *Son-in-Law*. After a professional excursion to Canterbury, he engaged with Mr. Daly, of Dublin, as a low comedian; and in June 1794, appeared before an Irish audience in *Jacob Gawkey*, and *Lingo*, which characters he repeated a second time. Mr. Daly wanting a young man to play

what are theatrically termed walking gentlemen, and this being the line of business he had allotted to Mathews before his appearance, his success in a different walk of the drama was not so great.

After suffering every misery under the management of Mr. Daly, he quitted Dublin at the end of eighteen months, for London; but, having landed in Wales, from contrary winds, he, by chance, saw a play at Swansea, where he proposed to perform, was accepted, and appeared in *Lingo*, October 1795; and, as his reception was favourable, he was engaged, and continued for some time the principal low comedy performer with Mr. Masterman, the manager of the Carmarthen, Monmouth, and Cardiff theatres.

On Mr. Emery's being engaged at Covent-garden, Mr. Mathews became his substitute at York; and appeared in August 1798, in *Silky*, in the *Road to Ruin*, and *Lingo*. He remained there till May 1803, when Mr. Colman engaged him for the Hay-market, where he appeared, May 16th, in *Jabel*, in the *Jew*, and in *Lingo*; and since that period he has continued to perform a variety of characters. In 1797 he married Miss Strong, of Exeter, who died in 1802. He afterwards married Miss Jackson (a pupil of Mr. Kelly and Mrs. Crouch) of the York company, who is a pretty little woman, an interesting actress, and performs at the Hay-market and at Drury-lane.

Mr. Mathews now plays second parts to Mr. Fawcett, at Mr. Colman's theatre. It is said that his imitative powers are seen to more advantage in private company than on the stage; in other words, he is a good imitator, but a bad player.

MATTOCKS, Mrs. ISABELLA—The maiden name

of this excellent actress was Hallam. She was born in 1746, and her uncle, William Hallam, was manager of the theatre in Goodman's-fields, where her father performed, and was a favourite in low comedy. She is also related to the family of Mr. Rich, who was manager of Covent-garden. It is reported that her father was obliged, through embarrassments, to quit England, and try his fortune in America; where, soon after his arrival, he became manager of the theatres in New York, Charlestown, and Philadelphia; and realized a fortune of 10,000*l*. but that his family lost the whole in the American war.

Miss Hallam, on her father's departure, was educated by her aunt, Mrs. Barrington, who was an actress of merit; and, at the age of four years and a half, her little niece performed the part of the Parish Girl, in *What d'ye call it?* for her uncle's benefit, at Covent-garden. She was so diminutive at this time, that a gentleman in the pit observed, "I can *hear* very well, but I can't *see* her without a glass." At fifteen, she appeared in the character of Juliet, at the same theatre, where she has continued ever since, to support a variety of characters with extraordinary ability.

Her husband, Mr. Mattocks, was a performer at Covent-garden, and for some time manager at Liverpool; he died in 1804. Her grandfather was killed by Mr. Macklin in a dispute. Her daughter, who was at Liverpool, married a gentleman of the Inner Temple in 1801.

Of late years, the parts generally assigned to Mrs. Mattocks, have been whimsical chambermaids, old maids, &c. &c. and in this cast of character, Mrs. Mattocks, even to the present day, stands unrivalled. Her manner of playing is peculiar to herself; and the richness of her descrip-

tive powers, never fails to obtain the most flattering marks of public approbation. She is also a most approved speaker of an epilogue, in which she shews a perfect knowledge of nature, in all the various habits of life.

MELLON, Miss—Is the daughter of a gentleman who was in the East India service, and died some months previous to her birth. In the course of two years afterwards, her mother married Mr. Entwisle, a leader of the band in a provincial theatre. This connexion first introduced Miss MELLON to the stage, where, as a child, she occasionally performed trifling characters.

The first regular engagement she entered into was with Mr. Stanton, in whose circuit she continued until her removal to Drury-lane; which was occasioned by the following circumstance. At Stafford, Miss Mellon was favoured with the friendship of Mr. Wright, a banker; with whose sister and daughters she lived in habits of intimacy. Mr. Sheridan being on a visit to the family during the races, saw her play the characters of Rosalind, in *As You Like It*; and Priscilla Tomboy; and was so highly satisfied with the performance, that he instantly gave her an engagement. She accordingly appeared on the boards of Drury-lane in the season of 1793-4, in *Lydia Languish*, in the *Rivals*; and her exertions were crowned with great success.

Since that period she has continued to perform a variety of characters, in both the gay and sentimental departments of the drama; and her efforts have evinced abilities greatly above mediocrity. Her person is rather *en bon point*; but her figure is elegant: her features unite expres-

sion with softness, and indicate great good-nature. If there is a fault in her professional labours, it is that she does not, at all times, take a necessary interest in the scene in which she performs. It is an error easily remedied; and, though not mentioned to detract from her estimation with the public, it is necessary to notice a blemish, with a view to remove it, as well for her own advantage, as the satisfaction it gives an audience, to see a performer support the bye-play of a character with effect.

Within these two years, Miss Mellon purchased a whole ticket in the English lottery, which came up a ten thousand pounds prize.

MELVIN, Mr.—This person, like a number of his brethren, has encountered all the miseries attendant on a stroller's life; and has performed in various country theatres. In the York company, it is said, he first came into notice, as a representative of sailors, &c. In the season of 1806, he was engaged at Covent-garden, and made his appearance in the character of Gossamer, in the comedy of *Laugh when you can*; and Michael, in the farce of the *Adopted Child*. His efforts were successful; and he excited all that liberality, and acknowledgment of public approbation, which are the characteristics of a British audience. He has since assumed a variety of parts of nearly the same description as the above. That he has merit, is beyond all doubt; but it is, at present, of little or no service to the proprietors, as they have several performers who are eminent in Mr. Melvin's line of acting; and, if judged of comparatively, they far exceed him in professional excellence.

After performing a few times, he has been made but little or no use of, in consequence of the above cause.

MIDDLETON, JAMES—Whose real name was Magan, was born in Dublin, where his father was an apothecary, and his uncle a woollen-dra-per. He received a liberal education, having been intended for the profession of surgery ; but, flattered with the applause he obtained in a private play, he determined on becoming an actor ; and through the interest of Mr. Oulton, the intelligent compiler of the *Thespian Dictionary*, he had an interview with Mr. Harris ; who, on hearing him rehearse a character, was of opinion that he should previously practise in the country ; and therefore gave him a letter of recommendation to the Bath managers ; at the same time generously assuring him that his theatre should be open to him whenever he pleased. An invitation to Bath accordingly came ; which he was prevented from immediately accepting, through a deficiency of pecuniary means.

At this time he received a letter from Mr. Daly, the then manager at Dublin, to whom he was related ; expatiating, in a very eloquent style, on the various difficulties attending a theatrical life, and entreating him to return to his friends and profession. But he was already resolved ; and, wanting the means to adopt his resolution, became suddenly disordered in his mind. The friend with whom he lodged, provided him with the means ; but chiefly, indeed, to prevent self-destruction, which he then, more than once, attempted. He now assumed the name of Middleton, and made his appearance on the Bath stage with considerable applause. In the cha-

acters of Romeo and Othello, he became a favourite.

Ambitious to tread the London boards, contrary to all advice, he quitted Bath at the end of the season, and made his appearance at Covent-garden, in the character of Romeo, Sept. 22, 1788, being then only twenty years of age. His reception was flattering, but his exertions were not of a nature to warrant a large salary from the managers. He repeated the character several nights; and remained at this theatre during the season, on the humble sum of thirty shillings per week; during which time he kept expensive lodgings, and a servant in livery.

After this he played at Dublin, and several provincial theatres, with some reputation. He appeared at Covent-garden another season; and one night, in the middle of the character of Nerestan, in *Zara*, he suddenly left the theatre; and the remainder of the part was read by another performer. This was ascribed to a disordered mind, of which he had already given symptoms.

A slave to dissipation, he was latterly the sport of fortune, and oftentimes the object of charity and pity. His last engagement was at Drury-lane. His conception of the characters he performed was generally just; but nature had thrown insurmountable obstacles in his way to theatrical fame, both in his voice and countenance. However, if he had possessed prudence, he had merit sufficient for walking gentlemen, and third-rate characters in tragedy.

He married a very amiable woman, the daughter of Mr. Whyte, who was the friend of Mr. Thomas Sheridan, and kept the famous grammar-school in Dublin many years; and at whose seminary Mr. Middleton had acquired the ele-

ments of his education. His wife and two children, are left to lament the indiscretions of a husband and a father, which have placed them in the most destitute situation, after having conducted himself to extreme poverty and an early grave, on the 18th of October, 1799. Mr. Charles Kemble shewed him many attentions, and, at his death, raised a sum sufficient to defray the funeral expences.

MOODY, JOHN—This veteran of the stage is, by some, said to be a native of Cork, while others assert that he was born in the neighbourhood of Covent-garden. It is certain, however, that he had a narrow escape from being forced into the rebellion in 1745. One of his biographers also says, that soon after his appearance on the stage he embarked for Jamaica, where he performed for several years. The first authentic intelligence of him as an actor, is as a member of the Norwich company, where he was the principal tragedian, and performed both the heroes and lovers. His first appearance at Drury-lane was in the character of Thyræus, in Antony and Cleopatra, January 1759; owing to the sudden indisposition of Mr. Holland, whose name was in the bills for the part. To this accident he owed his introduction to Drury-lane; and Garrick, for his services that night, presented him with five guineas. He made his regular *debut* May 22, in the same year, in Henry the Eighth; and soon after fixed his reputation as an actor, by his performance of Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan, in Love-a-la-mode; and at the same period represented, with great effect, Rustic, in Harlequin's Invasion. In 1761 he farther added to his reputation, by his performance of Captain O'Cutter, in The

Jealous Wife; and the Irishman, in the Register Office. So faultless was his manner of performing Irish characters, at this time considered, as to draw from Mr. Churchill, a remarkable eulogium in *The Rosciad*, which Mr. Moody always considered as his passport to the temple of fame.

After he had been a few years on the London theatre, his activity in defence of the property of his employers, embroiled him in a dispute, which occasioned a temporary dismissal from the stage; to which he was not restored, until he had published an apology in terms more humiliating than the nature of the offence demanded. This transaction originated in the disputes relative to the taking half-price. January 25, 1769, the malcontents, who called themselves the *Town*, determined to bring their demand to an issue. On that day a printed paper was industriously dispersed in the taverns, coffee-houses, &c. complaining of the managers of the theatres refusing admittance at the end of the third act of a play, for half-price. At Drury-Lane theatre, in the evening, upon the drawing up of the curtain, when Messrs. O'Brien and Holland began the play of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, they were interrupted by a confused noise; upon which Mr. Garrick came upon the stage, and attempted to speak; but an uproar immediately began; and, the ladies withdrawing, the benches were torn up, the glass lustres broke, and thrown upon the stage, and a general confusion ensued, which prevented the play from going on; and, about nine o'clock the house was cleared, the money having been returned. On this occasion Mr. Moody considered himself bound to protect the theatre from mischief; and endeavoured to secure some of the rioters; one in particular, who,

with a lighted torch, menaced to set fire to the house. This was an offence not to be overlooked, and accordingly an atonement was to be demanded at the proper season. At Covent-garden theatre, redress having been demanded in the same manner, it was readily promised, on which the performers at that theatre were permitted to proceed. January 28, the following address to the public appeared in the Public Advertiser: "The managers of Drury-lane theatre, having been suddenly called upon last night, to answer the charge of an innovation in regard to their prices, Mr. Garrick acquainted the audience, that he was not conscious that the managers had done any thing in this respect, in which they were not fully authorized by the established usage of the theatre; and that if there had been the slightest innovation, it should be rectified. And this unexpected complaint, being grounded on the assertions contained in a printed paper, which had been, the same day, industriously circulated in coffee-houses, and distributed through every part of the theatre, Mr. Garrick promised to publish a full answer to the charges contained in that paper: but the clamour still continuing, the performance of the play was entirely prevented; in consequence of which the public were addressed as follows: "The managers find themselves under the necessity of informing the public, that a full and satisfactory answer will be published accordingly: and it is hoped that they will, with their usual candour, suspend their judgment on this occasion till the appearance of such answer, which will be in a few days."

At night, when the third music began at Drury-lane, the audience insisted on Britons Strike Home; and The Roast Beef of Old Eng-

land; which were played accordingly. Mr. Holland coming on to speak the prologue to *Elvina*, he was hissed off. Mr. Garrick immediately came on, but could not obtain a hearing. After a confused uproar, which lasted some time, during which he remained on the stage in a state of mind that may be more easily conceived than expressed, a hundred voices, calling out, *hear him, hear him!* while as many others called out, *hear the pit!* he was asked from the pit, "Whether he would answer the questions that should be put to him?" He respectfully said, "He would." The following question was then put: "Will you, or will you not, give admittance for half-price, after the third act, except during the first winter of a new pantomime?"—Mr. Garrick wanted to explain the reasons of his conduct, in asking full prices during the first run of a new play, but could not obtain a hearing. He was required to give an explicit answer, Yes, or No. After again attempting to speak, or explain his conduct, he called out, in some agony, not without a mixture of indignation, we may suppose, at the uncandid treatment he had received—*Yes!* and the audience expressed their triumph in the manner they usually express their applause. Mr. Ackman, an actor, who had incurred some displeasure on the preceding night, was next called upon to make an acknowledgment; which he did. Mr. Moody was then called upon to apologize for the offence he had given. He imagining that he should bring the audience into good humour, by a laughable absurdity in the tone and language of a low-bred Irishman, said, "He was very sorry that he had displeased them by saving their lives, in putting out the fire." This speech was so ill taken, that it rather inflamed than

cooled the rage of the rioters; and they loudly and vehemently insisted that he should go down on his knees, and ask their pardon. Mr. Moody was so far from complying with this positive command, that he had the courage absolutely to refuse, saying, "I will not; by G—d!" When he came off the stage, Mr. Garrick was so pleased with his behaviour, that he received him with open arms, and assured him that whilst he was master of a guinea, he should be paid his income; but, that if he had been so mean as to submit to the required abasement, he would never have forgiven him." The tumult was so great, on Mr. Moody's refusing to comply with the demand of the audience, that, to appease their wrath, Mr. Garrick promised he should not appear on the stage again, during the time he was under their displeasure. Mr. Moody's situation was by no means eligible: he was reduced to the necessity of either taking leave of the capital, and joining a country company, or of depending upon the generosity of the manager. He could expect no mercy from the gentlemen who had enjoined so severe a penance for an act of duty: he was therefore determined, after weighing all consequences, to seek redress from the original plotter of all the mischief, Mr. Fitzpatrick; and accordingly waited upon him, at his chambers in the Temple. Mr. Fitzpatrick, perceiving that Mr. Moody was determined to exact satisfaction, asked him what reparation he wished to have. Mr. Moody said, he expected that he would sign his name to a paper, and repair the injury, by acknowledging that he had acted towards him in a most unjust and improper manner; at the same time that he would request his friends not to insist on the penance prescribed to Mr. Moody; but to receive him to favour, on his making any

reasonable apology. Mr. Fitzpatrick, after some altercation, proposed to serve Mr. Moody in another way, and perhaps more effectually than the signing any instrument whatever: he wrote a letter to Mr. Garrick, in a strain very condescending, and, to a proud man, very humiliating. The chief purport of the epistle was to acquaint him, that whenever he thought proper to introduce Mr. Moody to the audience, he and all his friends would attend, and contribute to his being reinstated in the favour of the public. In this manner this troublesome affair concluded, and Mr. Moody returned to the stage; on which he remained till the end of the season of 1796, when he retired to Barnes Common; where he continues to enjoy good health, and all the benefits of early prudence.

Of his professional talents, we cannot speak very favourably: he, however, must have possessed some merit in the days of Churchill, to have received that writer's praise, and have produced "mirth from their foibles—from their virtues, praise." Within our knowledge of the stage, we have seen Mr. Moody in several of his best Hibernian characters; and his performances appeared to us extremely tame and spiritless. The only character in which he seemed at home, was Sir Sampson Legend, in *Love for Love*; in this he certainly was very great: but, the apparent habits, together with the physical qualities, of Mr. Moody, so exactly accorded with Congreve's portrait, that he could not fail in the delineation of the above part.—Johnstone has done for Irish characters what Garrick did for the stage—out of a chaos raised a world.

Moss, HENRY—This tragedian was a native of Ireland, and born in the year 1729. His fa-

ther was rector of Tuam, in the province of Connaught. Henry, as well as his father, was bred at Trinity college, Dublin, where he obtained his degree. His first appearance on the stage was at Smock-alley, November 28, 1749, in the character of Zanga, in the *Revenge*; which he played three successive nights with uncommon applause. His next character was Richard; after which he quarrelled with the manager, came to London, and appeared at Drury-lane, in Richard, with considerable success. He continued acting in London, and occasionally in Dublin, till the year 1761, when he became manager of Smock-alley, in opposition to Barry and Woodward. This contention, which led to the ruin of his rivals, completed his own; and, after various turns of fortune, excluded from Drury-lane and Covent-garden, he died at Chelsea, November 1773, aged 43, in extreme poverty, having only one halfpenny in his possession at his decease. Mr. Garrick proposed to bury him at his own expence, but his uncle prevented that offer from taking place.

This actor is said to have excelled most in characters of ire, ambition, and regal tyranny. He had a strong and harmonious voice, which could rise from the lowest note to the highest pitch of sound; and was, indeed, one of the most comprehensive ever heard. Notwithstanding, in his accents there were frequent improprieties, as Churchill has remarked; and, in tender passages, he was very awkward. He was censured by the critics for too much mechanism in his action and delivery:—the frequent resting of his left hand on his hip, with his right hand extended, was ludicrously compared to the handle and spout of a tea-pot; whilst others called him, “The dis-

tiller of syllables." He was exceedingly vain of his abilities; and that vanity (as is generally the case) was accompanied with jealousy. He was offended that Garrick should play Richard, after his performance of it at Drury-lane, when the play, and perhaps the player, was commanded by the Prince of Wales. In acting, he frequently worked himself up to a belief that he was the very person he represented; and one night that he returned home to his lodgings, after performing King Richard, he flew into a violent passion with his servant, who appeared before him with a small candle, and asked him if that was a taper fit to light *his majesty* to bed?

It is said, that notwithstanding all his defects, he was, in London, after Garrick and Barry, the most applauded and valuable actor.

MOUNTAIN, Mrs.—This pretty woman, whose maiden name was Wilkinson, was born in London, about the year 1770. On the opening of the Circus, in 1782, where her father and mother were employed, she made her first appearance, as Madame Hazard, in a petite piece, called Mount Parnassus; in which she evinced considerable judgment. Having performed a few nights at the Hay-market, she was introduced to Mr. Tate Wilkinson, who brought her out at Hull, in the character of Patty, in *The Maid of the Mill*. The simplicity of manner, and the sweetness of her voice, at once gave her a consequence in the theatre, which induced the manager to raise her salary to that of the first-rate musical performer, which was twenty-five shillings per week.

So much was this lady esteemed at York, that when Mrs. Jordan left the company, to engage at Drury-lane, the public would accept of no other

substitute than Miss Wilkinson. At Leeds, the inhabitants were so much pleased with her performance of the Poor Soldier, that several gentlemen made up a handsome purse, as they found her private character equally entitled to respect, and requested the manager to present it to her; which he accordingly did, in the following manner: "Here, Miss, is a reward for your performance of the part you played last night; but, more particularly, for your respectability in a *character* which, I hope, you will always be perfect in—that of a good daughter." Soon after this circumstance she played at Liverpool; and in 1786 was engaged at Covent-garden, where she appeared in the character of Fidelia, in *The Foundling*; and Leonora, in the *Padlock*, with every satisfaction to the public; but during the season she had few opportunities of exerting her abilities. She now married Mr. Mountain, a native of Ireland, then leader of the band at the theatre and Concert-hall of Liverpool, and who afterwards became leader of the band at Covent-garden. In the summer of 1789 she visited Dublin, where her performances were highly approved of. At the close of the season of 1791 she left Covent-garden, as her salary was not paid when indisposition had rendered her incapable of performing. Mrs. Mountain then visited Dublin again, during a winter season; and afterwards returned to her situation at Covent-garden: but, on the expiration of her articles, in consequence of another difference about salary, she was finally discharged. She then sung at Vauxhall; and afterwards went to Bath, where she greatly improved her vocal powers under Rauzzini. On her return from Bath she was engaged at Drury-lane, and has continued to sustain a va-

riety of vocal characters with the universal approbation of the public.

Mrs. Mountain having left the Hay-market on account of the new arrangement in 1803, she has, during the summer season, visited the principal towns in the kingdom, with an entertainment performed by herself, called *The Lyric Novelist, or Life Epitomized*; written for the occasion by Mr. Cherry. At her house in Russell-street, Bloomsbury, she has fitted up a suite of rooms for the reception of the lovers of vocal and instrumental music; who, at the very reasonable subscription of two guineas, are admitted to her concerts three nights a week during lent. Last season she had the assistance of Braham, Storace, Kelly, Naldi, and most of the distinguished warblers of the present day.

The entertainment and company are of the first description; and Mrs. Mountain's attention to the accommodation of her elegant subscribers is highly creditable to her taste and liberality.

In characters of an artless description, this lady appears particularly happy; as they seem to accord best with her countenance, which, though by no means inexpressive, is eminently calculated to depict the serener passions of the mind. The loveliness of her features, which are characterized by an amiable simplicity, are shewn to great advantage in vocal parts of a genteel and sentimental nature. In this particular province of the drama Mrs. Mountain stands almost unrivalled. She, however, occasionally assumes parts of an opposite nature; and in these we have generally seen her acquit herself in the most creditable manner. She is certainly a great acquisition to the London stage.

MUNDEN, JOSEPH—This celebrated comedian was born in the year 1758, and is the son of a respectable tradesman, who resided in Brook-street, Holborn, but who died when his son was an infant.

Under the care of his mother, young Munden was brought up; and at the age of twelve, was placed with an apothecary, with whom he did not remain more than a month.

Disgusted with the study of medicine, he was consulted, as to a choice of a trade or profession; and being an excellent penman, was admitted at the office of an attorney in New Inn. This situation he soon left for the office of a law-stationer in Chancery-lane, where he was articled to serve five years; but his master dying within two years, he was turned over to another in the same line, with whom he lived in continual discord. From the unsettled state of his situation at this period, and having formed favourable notions of theatrical exhibitions, he determined upon the life of an actor; and accordingly sought the acquaintance of performers, and stage-struck heroes like himself.

One of his Thespian friends having been engaged to perform at Liverpool, induced Munden to take a trip thither, in order to try his imitative powers. Our young adventurer accepted the invitation, and followed his friend about a week after his departure. On his arrival at Liverpool, he found some difficulty in obtaining the most servile employment in the theatre. At length he succeeded in getting engaged to write out characters; for which he received eighteen-pence per night. In the course of time he was honoured with an employ more congenial to his inclina-

tion, namely, that of appearing upon the stage; and though he only filled up a silent group, yet he was before the audience, and he was happy. When the season closed, the company left this place for London, where young Munden, for want of cash, could not follow them. He now procured a situation in the office of the town-clerk, where he made himself useful. He had not been long in his employ, before the play of Henry the Fourth was to be performed for the benefit of a decayed tradesman. A number of young men in the town, no less fond than our hero of exhibiting their talents in this way, gave their assistance, and Munden, for the first time, spoke on the stage, as one of the Carriers, and as Bardolph; in both of which parts he shewed traits of dawning merit. The success of his efforts increased his enthusiasm for the stage; and on hearing of a strolling company at Rochdale, in Lancashire, he repaired thither, and became a great acquisition to that dramatic corps.

A whimsical circumstance is related of this company, which took place during the performance of the Fair Penitent. In the scene where Calista is seated, in all the dignity of grief, beside the clay-cold corpse of the false Lothario, it unfortunately happened, that the person who lay as the lifeless form of the gay, perfidious youth, was a footman in the neighbourhood. His master returning home at an earlier hour than was expected, and divining the cause of his servant's absence, repaired to the theatre. High words instantly took place behind the scenes, between the gentleman and the stern Horatio; which reaching the ears of *John*, he started up, to the surprise and mirth of the audience, and immediately

took to his heels. Calista expressed her astonishment, blushed for the first time, and retired in confusion.

After a short stay, young Munden returned to Liverpool, where he remained two years in the town-clerk's office. Still uneasy under any but stage restraint, the days passed heavily away; and he determined on quitting his master, in the hope of meeting with an opportunity of finally fixing in that profession for which he thought Nature had designed him. With a guinea he set off for Chester, where he remained until he was brought to the last shilling. With this solitary hope, he entered that theatre as a spectator, of which he afterwards became manager.

The close of the entertainment brought to his recollection, that his last shilling was gone, without knowing where to procure either supper or bed. Just, however, as he was coming out of the theatre, he met a butcher of whom he had some knowledge, that relieved his wants for the night. As he could not obtain an engagement at the above theatre, he offered himself as a clerk to a stationer, but was unfortunately unsuccessful. While wandering about the streets, without knowing what method to pursue, in order to appease hunger, he met with a London acquaintance, who generously relieved his temporary difficulties. He then determined to return to London; and his friend pledged his ring, to render his resolution in some degree practicable; but as the money raised on the above article would not permit them to ride single, they mounted a jack-ass, and took leave of Chester.

At this town Munden had received a letter of recommendation from the stationer, to a gentleman

in the law at Whitchurch; and on his arrival there, presented it, but could not obtain employment.

On his arrival at Birmingham, fortune again favoured him with a friend, whose kindness enabled him to proceed to Stratford-upon-Avon; and though he might have taken a nearer road to London, the temptation of visiting the birth-place of the immortal Shakspeare, was too strong for his romantic mind to withstand.

About this time the Warwickshire militia were to be embodied, and great numbers of recruits were assembling from different parts of the country, to join the regiment at Stratford. Numbers presented themselves on the road: one of whom, seemingly more intelligent than the rest, Munden chose for a companion; and to each other their mutual necessities were imparted. Our young adventurer learned from his comrade, that the regiment would consist of a numerous body of men, and that it would be difficult to obtain a night's lodging. His friend, whose brain necessity had rendered fertile, suggested a thought which was approved of, and put in practice. It was, to present himself before the serjeant as a recruit, and by that means obtain a billet for the night. After some time spent by his friend in searching for the serjeant's quarters, he at length found him. The serjeant inquired if Munden was of the regiment, who replying in the affirmative, he obtained for the night bed and board. As soon as the calls of hunger were satisfied, his mind, in spite of its depression, became elated, and diffused its influence over the whole assembly. From the cherished store of various dramatic writers, together with the welcome song, our young actor drew forth a fund of entertain-

ment, which enlivened the evening, and rendered him king of the company, who sighed or smiled, as his effusions were mournful or merry; and thus the evening passed in perfect harmony, till they retired to their respective places of rest.

About ten in the morning the drum beat to arms, the regiment mustered, and with colours flying, repaired to the field, where Munden was previously told by his friend to follow, in order to be enlisted: but as he had a view only to what he had obtained, namely, a supper and a bed, he felt not the smallest inclination to attend to his instructions. He therefore quitted his military friends somewhat abruptly, chusing rather to enlist under the banners of Melpomene than those of Mars, and that evening reached Woodstock. Here he applied at several public-houses for a lodging; but his appearance probably was not favourable to his application, and he was refused. Again, however, his good genius relieved him from distress: at the last place of his request, he recognized, and was recognized by, a gardener who had left the town of Liverpool a few weeks before, in consequence of a law-suit, in which a verdict had been given against him. Much pleased at meeting Mr. Munden, owing to a grateful remembrance of services which our actor had rendered him during the time he was clerk to the gentleman at Liverpool who defended his cause, the poor gardener gave a proof that good offices are not always forgotten. In the morning he pursued his journey to London, where his mother received him with all the fondness of parental affection. He now returned to a law-stationer's office, and continued driving the quill for several months. The stage was still however, the darling object of his mind; and having

become acquainted with the manager of a strolling company at Leatherhead, in Surrey, he enlisted under the banners of this theatrical monarch, and left town with *thirteen pence*. He was led to believe, that he was to perform on the evening of his arrival at the above place, and should receive a share of the profits which should accrue from the company's exertions; but to his great mortification he found the barn in no state to receive an audience; not a bench was formed, nor a scene raised, while the stage-keeper was brushing down the cobwebs, and sweeping away the refuse of Ceres' golden train, left by the hand of the sturdy thrasher. The thirteen pence expended, no prospect of playing that night, and for the hapless sons of Thespis, *no trust*, the manager was applied to; but alas! he was in the same predicament with his followers. The succeeding night was appointed for a performance; the barn-yard cleared, planks laid, and saw-dust strewed for an expected audience; but not a swain or damsel came; all was solitary, and the manager and performers went comfortless to bed. After two or three unsuccessful evenings, a play was bespoke by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, for the Saturday-night, which being a night of fashion, the audience assembled, and the profits allowed to each performer *six shillings*, besides having paid off incidental expences incurred by the failure of the two unfortunate evenings. To this good luck may be added the saving of *two small pieces of candle*. This was the first money Mr. Munden ever gained by acting; and although he had experienced by this time a sufficient share of misery, yet he continued to cherish the sanguine hope of better times. Benefits coming on, the first fell to the lot of Mr. Munden; but from the short-

ness of time the company were allowed to perform, he was obliged to take a partner. However, the night previous to his benefit, the theatre was burned down: but, never at a loss to combat with misfortunes, he drew up a petition, and a collection was made in the neighbourhood, amounting to between twenty and thirty pounds. The manager, to shew his gratitude to the company, and particularly to our hero, who suggested the petition, gave about *five shillings* to about twelve members; and under the pretence of going to London to furnish a wardrobe for another theatre, left his troop, and never returned again. Finding the manager not so good as his word, our hero came to town, and immediately repaired to the register-office for engaging actors, then known by the name of the Black-lion, Russell-street, Drury-lane. Mr. Munden, as well as the greater part of his burnt-out brethren, were engaged, and after performing in several villages in Berkshire, they repaired to Windsor, where at length they were rather successful. From this company Mr. Munden was *discharged*, for refusing to perform at two days notice the part of Altamont. Discarded, and once more nearly penniless, our child of wayward fate turned his course towards London. Here he again found a sheltering roof in the dwelling of his indulgent mother.

Several private plays about this time were given at the Little Theatre, Hay-market, in which he often performed. At one of these representations, a Mr. Hurst, the then manager of the Canterbury* theatre, saw him, and having formed

* After supporting Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, and the tyrant Richard, at Canterbury, Mr. Swords, formerly of

a favourable opinion of his talents, engaged him for the season. At this period, in the memorable year 1780, Mr. Munden began to emerge from his difficulties. The line he was to figure in was that of second characters in tragedy and comedy; but for the want of a comedian, he was persuaded to attempt the first line in what is termed low comedy. His success was equal to his wishes; and he left Canterbury with the goodwill and applause of its inhabitants. From Canterbury he went to Brighton, where he was also a favourite actor, and much patronized.

About this time a performer of some consequence in the company of Messrs. Austin and Whitelock dying at Chester, Mr. Munden was engaged to supply the place of the deceased comedian; and in a short time established his reputation as an excellent comic actor. From Chester he went to Whitehaven, and almost every town of any consequence in the north; in each of which he obtained the favor of the public, and no small share of pecuniary remuneration. From a careful turn of mind, Mr. Munden was in time enabled to become a proprietor and manager. He purchased, in conjunction with Mr. Whitelock, the whole of the company's concerns in the theatres of Newcastle, Lancaster, Preston, Warrington, Chester, and afterwards Sheffield.

The situation of manager, however pleasant it may sound, is embittered with numberless vexa-

the Hay-market theatre, and Mr. Munden, were obliged to take their passage from that city in a *Cart*; and in the course of their journey, the former exclaimed, "Tap my eyes!—when you are at Covent-garden and I at Drury-lane (for you know we shall be too eminent to be both retained by one house), what will the theatrical biographers say, when they hear that the *Great Billy Swords*, and the *Great Joe Munden*, rode from Canterbury to London in a *Cart*!"

tions. The different tastes of audiences, the varied tempers of actors, too ready to quarrel with parts allotted to them, the uncertain tenure of the different theatres, some of which were in the hands of gentlemen, in the respective places in which they were situated—soon altered Mr. Munden's opinion of management, and determined him to embrace the first opportunity of disposing of that property which he had so lately purchased under the fond idea of adding to his happiness. He soon accomplished his wishes, and left himself free to chuse any offered change that might present itself. The death of Mr. Edwin presented the opportunity wished for; and Mr. Munden removed to the metropolis. In the winter of 1790 he made his first appearance on the boards of Covent-garden theatre, in the very opposite characters of Sir Francis Gripe, in the *Busy Body*, and Jemmy Jumps, in the *Farmer*; in both of which characters he was justly admired, and received the most unbounded applause. He had however to subdue prejudice, and gradually win the public favour. On the secession of Messrs. Wilson and Quick, he joined a different line of business with the former, and with equal success. He performed two seasons at the Hay-market in 1797-8, and also at Dublin with Mr. Jones. He was one of the gentlemen who complained of the grievances at Covent-garden.

For the cast of character which comes within Mr. Munden's descriptive powers; his person (which is short, but well formed) is well calculated. He has also features particularly flexible and expressive, together with large blue eyes extremely brilliant; by which he can successfully impart all the passions of the mind without the

assistance of language. These physical endowments are of the first consequence to an actor; and no one can display them to more advantage than Mr. Munden. The characters in which he chiefly excels are those of old men of both sentimental and comic feature. The most conspicuous of his serious portraits is Old Dornton, in the *Road to Ruin*; which is a master-piece of scenic excellence. It would, however, be an act of injustice to him, to limit his powers to a few characters. There is scarcely any part in the comic department of the drama, in which he does not merit applause. His sailors are richly fraught with sterling and characteristic humour, and never fail to delight an audience. Some of his pastoral characters are also greatly entitled to praise; particularly those which are highly coloured with *cunning*. His eyes beam the possession of too much *art* for the just delineation of countrymen, whose leading feature is simplicity. His personification of Obadiah Prim, in Knight's farce of *Honest Thieves*, is as finished a piece of playing as ever adorned the stage. His features not only become relaxed or braced as the feelings of the character require, but his whole frame supports a corresponding motion. In this particular Munden possesses the great qualities of Parsons, whose limbs used to act.

Since the death of the above great comedian, he appears the only representative of Sir Fretful Plagiary; to which character he imparts considerable talent. *Harmony*, in the comedy of *Every One has his Fault*, is a part in which he is extremely great—he displays all its proper light and shadow without ever losing sight of the characteristic peculiarities of his portrait. His *Menenius*, in *Coriolanus*, is a very chaste piece of acting;

and shews that his mind is sufficiently capacious for the most difficult character in Shakspeare.

We might enumerate a long list of parts in the English drama, of which Mr. Munden is an excellent representative, if the limits of our work would admit of their notice; but he is so generally happy in whatever he assumes, that we must conclude our remarks on his professional abilities with an opinion that he is as great a comedian as ever the stage possessed. We cannot, however, pass unnoticed his talent of dressing his characters, which appears peculiar to himself. No performer was ever so happy in giving an appropriate costume to a part as Mr. Munden:—his dresses are always classical and effective; besides displaying considerable ingenuity in their adaptation, and manner of putting on.

His Witch in Macbeth might serve as a model for an artist: he evidently introduced the proper costume for this character, which justifies Banquo's question—

——“What are these,
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o'the earth,
And yet are on't?”

In private life Mr. Munden is a man of gentlemanly manners, and is highly gifted with the art of keeping the table in a roar. With great companionable qualities his society is much sought after, and universally esteemed. He is the father of a large family, part of whom are approaching adult life, with the advantages of education and connexion.

Mrs. Munden is a very pretty woman, of gentle and engaging manners, with a mind endowed with many accomplishments.

Mr. Munden's principal residence is at Ken-

tish-town, where it is said that elegance and hospitality are concentrated beneath his roof.

MURRAY, CHARLES—was born at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, in the year 1754. He is the son of Sir John Murray, of Broughton, Bart. whose name stands so conspicuous in the annals of the rebellion of 1745, as secretary to the Pretender; and who, on account of the active part which he took in the cause of that unfortunate prince, was arraigned for high treason; but afterwards pardoned by the King. Young Murray, under the immediate care of his father, received a classical education; and was afterwards sent to France, where he acquired the language of that country. On his return to England, he was placed under a medical gentleman, in London; and having attained a competent knowledge of pharmacy and surgery, he became a surgeon's mate in the sea service; in which capacity he remained during several voyages he made up the Mediterranean. In 1774 he was appointed surgeon to a vessel bound to the coast of Guinea; but relinquished the post, from a presentiment that he should not survive the fatal influence of the climate. Having performed with some applause at a private theatre in Liverpool, he determined, in spite of his friends, to quit the sea service, and venture on the stage. This intention he communicated to Mr. Younger, then manager of the Liverpool theatre, who, in consequence of having no vacancy for him at that time in his own company, sent him to York, with strong recommendations to Mr. Wilkinson. Here he made his first appearance in the character of Carlos, in the *Fop's Fortune*, April 21, 1775; having, from family motives, assumed the

name of Raymur, which is a transposition of the syllables of his own. He performed this part, which is remarkably long and difficult, at two days notice. Such quickness of study convinced the manager of his utility; and the applause which his performance met with, further convinced him of his merit. During his stay with the York company, he became a very deserved favourite with the inhabitants of that city; and his stay would, in all probability, have been considerably prolonged, had not a riot occasioned his departure. He received an insult at a tavern in Wakefield, in November 1776; aimed chiefly at his profession, which, with becoming spirit, he resented. The succeeding play-night a party assembled, in order to extort a public concession. The play was *Alexander*; and the party-rage was levelled at Raymur, and a Mr. Eyles, who had given the entertainment at the above tavern. Mr. Raymur was to perform *Hephestion*, and Mr. Eyles, *Lysimachus*. On the opening of the play, the tumult became general; and "Pardon!" was the universal cry. Mr. Eyles acquiesced; Mr. Raymur refused: he quitted the stage, and his part was read.

The next night was the *Beaux Stratagem*. Raymur's party insisted he should play—a scene of confusion took place. He appeared booted to apologize for not performing, being on the eve of departure for Doncaster. His friends leaped from the boxes on the stage, guarded the avenues of the wings, and forced him to go through his character without letting him dress for it, or suffering a scene to be shifted. He played his part, and was that night escorted by a large party to Doncaster.

He then followed the sea service for a short

time; but meeting with disappointments, engaged with Mr. Griffiths, then manager of the Norwich theatre, where he resumed his real name. During his stay with this company he produced two dramatic pieces—*The New Maid of the Oaks*, 1778; and *The Experiment*, 1779. From Norwich he went to Bath; where he became so great a favourite, that Mr. Harris engaged him for five years. He took leave of the Bath audience in a very elegant and interesting prosaic address, on Mrs. Murray's benefit.

His first appearance at Covent-garden, was in *Shylock*, in *The Merchant of Venice*; and *Bagatelle*, in the farce of the *Poor Soldier*, Sept. 11, 1796; and his reception was extremely flattering. At that time his voice possessed all its native strength, and his other physical endowments were in their full vigour. Since that period he has sustained a great variety of characters; but his general employment has been in the support of old men, in tragedy and comedy. In characters of this description he is highly respectable; and but seldom or ever over-acts the parent, guardian, or aged servant. His voice, at times, appears to fail him; but his chastity of delineation compensates for the infirmity of advanced life. As a private gentleman, he is said to be very respectable, and his conversation elegant and entertaining.

NOBLE, Mr.—was originally a coach-herald painter; but an early attachment to the stage led him into the company of young men who exerted their imitative talents at private theatres. On the boards of the theatre in *Tottenham-court-road*, young Noble made his first appearance; and, having received encouragement, continued

his theatrical services till he became an eminent private actor. Pleasure, however, without profit, he soon found would not answer all the necessary purposes of life; he therefore relinquished the gentleman actor, for the professional player; and became a member of the Newcastle company; in which he assumed the characters of sailors, whimsical old men, Irishmen, &c. with some degree of respectability. In 1803 he was engaged by Mr. Colman, and made his *debut* in *Lope Tocho*, in the *Mountaineers*; and afterwards performed several other parts with success. After an absence of a season from the theatre, he was re-engaged, through the interest of Mr. Winston; and has, no doubt, been found useful in various departments of the Drama. His wife, who is also on the stage, is said to be related to Mrs. Henry Siddons: she is a correct speaker, and her exertions augur much promise of future reputation.

OLDFIELD, ANN—This celebrated actress was born in 1683. Her father was a captain in the guards, under king James, but left his family in a condition that made it necessary for Miss Oldfield to be put to a sempstress, in King-street, Westminster. For some time her mother and she lived with a relation, who kept the Mitre Tavern, in St. James's market. The talent in which she so eminently shone, displayed itself very early in life; though it was owing to an odd circumstance that it was first properly discovered. Mr. Farquhar was accidentally at the tavern above-named, when he was struck with the voice of a person reading a comedy, in a room behind the bar, with so much vivacity and humour, as gave him at the same time infinite surprize and satisfaction; he

soon acquainted Sir John Vanbrugh (who was a friend to the family) with the jewel thus fortunately found; but it was some time before she could be prevailed upon to appear on the stage; though she afterwards was apt to confess, that she only wanted a few decent entreaties. Sir John Vanbrugh, thoroughly satisfied with so promising a genius, recommended her to Mr. Rich, then patentee of the king's theatre, who engaged Miss Oldfield at the low salary of sixteen shillings a week. This was in the year 1699: and here she remained for a twelvemonth, considered almost as a mute, and disregarded; till Sir John Vanbrugh gave her the part of Alinda, in the *Pilgrim of Beaumont and Fletcher*. This gentle character happily became that want of confidence which is inseparable from young beginners; who without it, seldom rise to excellence. Indeed, with so extraordinary a diffidence did she set out, as to keep her despondingly down to a formal flat manner of speaking; nor did she get forward till the year 1703, when, in the character of Leonora, in the comedy of *Sir Courtly Nice*, Miss Oldfield surprised the audience into the opinion of her having all the innate requisites of a good actress. Upon this unexpected exertion of her powers, the comedy of *The Careless Husband*, which had been thrown aside by the author, in despair of having justice done to the character of Lady Betty Modish, was now finished, and brought upon the stage in the following season, 1704. The uncommon reception this comedy met with, was owing, in a great measure, not only to the excellence of Miss Oldfield's action, but even to her personal manner of conversing. Many sentiments in this character may be said to be originally her own. Had her birth placed

her in a higher rank, she had certainly appeared in reality what, in this play, she only excellently acted. All that nature had given her of the actress, seemed now to have risen to its full perfection; but this was in some measure owing to the instruction of Arthur Maynwaring, Esq. who well understood the action of the stage, and took great pleasure in seeing her excel in it. Her connexion with this gentleman was, doubtless, of considerable service to her, both in a private and public point of view. Their intimacy continued for nine or ten years, till his death in 1712.

The last new character in which Mrs. Oldfield appeared, was that of Lady Townley, in the Provoked Husband; and which was a proof that she was still able to do more, if more could have been done for her. The managers, sensible of their obligations to her upon this occasion, made her a compliment of fifty guineas more than their agreement. Her *Estifania* is recorded as a part of great merit throughout the whole; and in particular her manner of pretending to shoot Perez. In this scene, when she drew the pistol from her pocket, Wilkes drew back, as if greatly frightened, and in a tremulous voice uttered—"What! kill thy own husband?" Mrs. Oldfield replied, with an archness of countenance, and half-shut eye, which at all times had a fascinating expression, "Let mine own husband, then, be in his own wits;" in a tone of voice so exactly in imitation of his, that the theatre was in a tumult of applause. In her full round of glory in comedy, she was rather inclined to slight tragedy; and would often say, "I hate to have a page dragging my tail about." When *Mithridates* was revived, it was with difficulty she was prevailed on to take her part; but she performed it to the

utmost height of perfection; and was afterwards much better reconciled to tragedy. In Calista, she was inimitable; in Cleopatra, majesty itself. So finished a figure, perhaps, never adorned the English stage.

After the death of Mr. Maynwaring she engaged the regard of Brigadier-general Charles Churchill. It has been said of her, that, even in her amours, she seemed to lose that glare, which appears round the persons of the failing fair; and that it was never known that she troubled the repose of any lady's lawful claim. In honour of her generosity of mind, we mention, that poor Savage received from her a bounty of fifty pounds a year, as long as she lived. She was once proposed to be one of the managers of the theatre; and when she was requested to name her own terms, and to continue in her former station, she asked no more than two hundred a year, and a benefit. Her salary, however, was soon raised to three hundred guineas, without her ever after desiring to have it increased.

The last character she appeared in was Lady Brute, in the Provoked Wife, April 18th, 1730. She had been long in a declining state of health, though the natural cheerfulness of her temper kept it out of sight; and she continued acting with universal applause; but in the midst of loud claps, the tear often trickled down her cheeks. In the last two months of her illness, when no longer able to assist, she declined receiving her salary, though by agreement she was entitled to it. She died October 23d, 1730, leaving liberal legacies to her relatives and friends; and very handsome fortunes to her two natural sons, Mr. Maynwaring and Mr. Churchill; the latter of whom afterwards married Lady Ann Maria Wal-

pole, the natural daughter of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford.

The corpse of Mrs. Oldfield lay in state at the Jerusalem Chamber, and was with great funeral pomp interred in Westminster-abbey, at the west end of the south aisle, near the monuments of Secretary Craggs and Mr. Congreve, which are close to the consistory or spiritual court. Taking occasion from these three eminent persons having never been married, a gentleman threw into Mrs. Oldfield's grave the following verses, written with a pencil :

If *Penance* in the Bishop's court be fear'd,
Congreve, and Craggs, and Oldfield will be scar'd,
To find that at the Resurrection day,
They've all so near the *Consistory* lay.

The following Epitaph is supposed to come from the same hand.

Hic jacet (cito jacet hic) Oldfield,
The brightest Actress Britain e'er did yield.
In Parts diverting her chief talent lay,
Wherein a thousand charms she did display.
Would every one in this degen'rate age,
Whilst acting here a part on life's short stage
Like her exert, pursuing nature's laws,
They'd meet at their last *Exit*, like applause.

At her own request her person was adorned with a head-dress of Brussels lace ; a Holland shift, with tucker and double ruffles of the same lace ; and a pair of new kid gloves. Her pall was supported by Lord de la War, Lord Harvey, Right Hon. George Bub Doddington, Charles Hedges, Esq. her son, Mr. Maynwaring, chief mourner ; and the funeral service performed by the senior prebendary, Dr. Baker.

PACKER, Mr.—Was originally bred a sadler, and followed that line of business in the vicinity

of Swallow-street. He commenced actor under the management of Mr. Garrick, and continued a member of Drury-lane theatre till 1805; when age and infirmities rendered him unfit for his professional duties, and he retired from the stage. He died in 1806.

As an actor, he only ranked among the useful: his general cast of character was old men in tragedy, and sentimental comedy. As a private individual, he was an honour to the stage, and greatly esteemed for his exemplary life.

PALMER, JOHN—Was a member of Drury-lane theatre, and supported the characters of well-bred gentlemen in comedy, and several of the tender parts of tragedy, with great success. He was the original Duke's Servant, in *High Life Below-stairs*. He was married to Mrs. Pritchard's daughter, who also belonged to Drury-lane. He died May 23, 1768, in the 40th year of his age. This performer's name has been frequently confounded with the following.

PALMER, JOHN—This celebrated performer was born in the parish of St. Luke's, Old-street, and was intended for the army by his father, who died about ten years before his son, and had been a soldier under the Marquis of Granby; by whom he was recommended to the late Mr. Garrick, who made him one of the box-door keepers at Drury-lane. John declined the army, and having from his infancy discovered a taste for drawing, was afterwards intended for a painter; but this intention was defeated by a strong inclination for the stage.

To Mr. Garrick he had in vain made application; but through the interest of a theatrical

friend he obtained an introduction to Mr. Foote, who on hearing him rehearse one of his own Prologues, and a speech from George Barnwell, observed, "that his comedy was promising, but his tragedy was damn'd bad." Accordingly he brought him forward in the character of Harry Scamper, in the farce of *The Orators*.

He continued with Mr. Foote during the season, and applied again to Mr. Garrick, who still was of opinion "he would not do." He then procured an engagement at Sheffield, where he came out in *Richmond*, in *Richard the Third*, and was well received; but indisposition obliged him to return immediately to London. The succeeding summer he was at Mr. Foote's theatre; but before the season closed, was suddenly discharged without any cause having been assigned; and he was again under the necessity of accepting a country engagement. At last he was received by Mr. Garrick, but on a very humble salary, for insignificant characters. The succeeding spring he was re-engaged by Mr. Foote; and the winter following, having in vain applied for an advance of salary at Drury-lane, he resigned that situation, and accepted of proposals which were offered him by Mr. Hurst, then manager of the Norwich theatre; whose company he joined at Colchester, and also played with them at Ipswich and Norwich. At this time his abilities began to ripen, and Mr. Ivory, manager of the Yarmouth theatre, not only engaged him, but gave him every encouragement. Here his first appearance was in *Young Wilding*. His reception was adequate to his most sanguine wishes—every night he met with unbounded applause.

He then returned to fulfil the remainder of his engagement at Norwich, and to his great sur-

prize, places in the boxes were taken for his benefit long before it was announced, in the names of two young ladies whom he saw a few days afterwards; and one of whom, Miss Burroughes, had made such an impression on his heart, that he took every means to see her constantly, but had not an opportunity to speak to her for near four months. This opportunity, however, led the way to frequent interviews, and afterward to a clandestine marriage, which was attended with some disagreeable circumstances: for the young lady's aunt, with whom she had lived, and from whom she had considerable expectations, was so enraged at the choice she had made, that she vowed never to see her again; which vow she too religiously observed, altered her will, and left all her property to a domestic.

Mr. Palmer, on his return to London, having been too late for an engagement at Mr. Foote's theatre, and refused one by Mr. Garrick, who thus resented his late departure, undertook to deliver Stevens's "Lecture on Heads" in the country, which was attended with some success. The summer following he was engaged at the Haymarket, but in consequence of Mr. Foote's having broken his leg, the opening of the theatre was procrastinated till June, when Mr. Barry was also engaged, as the manager was incapable of playing. The part of Iago, in Othello, was given to Mr. Palmer to study; but at rehearsal he was so awed at the presence of Mr. Barry, that in spite of all that gentleman's encouragements, he could not subdue his terrors, and was obliged to resign his part to Mr. Lee. Barry still paid him every attention, instructing him whenever he had an opportunity; and in the course of that season Palmer performed some characters of consequence.

with him, in which he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of the town. He then entered into a treaty with Mr. Barry for the Dublin theatre; from which he was dissuaded by Mr. Shuter, who introduced him to Mr. Beard, and by whom he was engaged for Covent-garden. Previous to his signing articles, he appeared on the boards in the play of Othello, when Mr. Garrick, who was in the boxes, was so pleased with his delivery of a few lines, that he sent for him immediately, and offered him a situation at his theatre. Partiality to this gentleman induced Palmer to solicit the manager of Covent-garden to release him from his engagement, which Mr. Beard with his usual liberality complied with, and heartily wished him success at the other house.

However, the first week that he called for his salary, to his great mortification he found that it was only twenty-five shillings. He went immediately to Mr. Garrick, and told him he expected three pounds per week, which was the same he had been offered at Covent-garden. 'The manager said, "It was impossible; but however his salary should be raised;" and *liberally* made an addition of *five shillings*. This mortification was still increased by the insignificant characters which were given him: but fortunately an opportunity offered, which released him from this obscurity. His namesake, the subject of the preceding article, who was to have performed Harcourt, in the Country Girl, the succeeding night, for Mr. Cauthery's benefit, was taken ill. The character was offered to several, but there was no one would undertake it at so short a notice. Palmer now offered to play it. "Play it!" echoed Garrick, "*read* it, you mean; for I am sure you cannot study it."—However, he persisted, and

the manager gave his consent with a smile of indignation. On the evening of the play he was astonished at his correctness; and he now gave him an engagement for four years at an increasing salary; but the highest was fifty shillings per week.

On the secession of Mr. Powell, and the deaths of the other Mr. Palmer and Holland, his line of business was considerably improved; and he gave up his situation at the Hay-market for an engagement at the Liverpool theatre, then under the management of Mr. Gibson, formerly an actor at Covent-garden, where he performed several seasons.

On the commencement of Mr. Sheridan's management, he met with a disagreeable accident while performing the character of Dionysius, in the Grecian Daughter, having received a severe blow from Mrs. Barry, owing to a failure in the spring of the dagger, which confined him to his room for several months; at which melancholy period he read long accounts of his *death* in the newspapers, and several eulogiums on his merit as an actor, regretting his early and accidental fall.

Mr. Palmer returned to the Hay-market theatre on the commencement of Mr. Colman's management; and retained his situation both there and at Drury-lane till he was appointed manager of the Royalty theatre. He laid the first stone of that building on the 16th of December, 1785. (See page 125).

On his failure at the Royalty he returned to his situation at Drury-lane, where he appeared in *Young Wilding*, in the *Liar*, with great applause. By his unfortunate connexion with the Royalty theatre, Mr. Palmer was considerably involved;

but having obtained the rules of the King's-bench he delivered his lecture on heads, and speeches out of various plays, at the Circus, in 1784; and at length performed a character there in a spectacle called *The Bastile*; for which he was apprehended in 1790 upon an information for acting contrary to the statute, and committed to the Surrey Bridewell: at which place Mr. Barret had also been confined on a similar charge. An application was made to the Court of King's-bench on Mr. Palmer's behalf, as a prisoner of that court; and a meeting of his creditors soon after taking place, it was agreed that he should perform at the established theatres, on making a certain reserve out of his weekly salary towards the discharge of his debts. At last he was so harassed by the accumulated *costs* of attornies, that he determined on going to America; and with this view went with his family to Edinburgh, for the purpose of embarking at Glasgow. Here he gave lectures in the New Town with Mr. Lee Lewes; and their success was so great that they continued these entertainments, with the assistance of Mr. R. Palmer and Mr. Wilson. Lee Lewes was to have joined Palmer in his American scheme, but the affairs of the latter having been somewhat accommodated by the kind interference of Mr. Moody, he and his family returned again to London.

For personal safety, however, he was often obliged to live in the theatre; but as he could not always be thus accommodated at Mr. Colman's house, it is said that one night when he was announced to perform, and consequently obliged to attend, he was conveyed there from Drury-lane in Doctor Lenitive's box, which is used in the farce of *The Prize*. Latterly he

quitted his situation at the Hay-market, and employed his summer seasons in the country. His last engagement was at Liverpool, and on the morning of the day on which he was to have performed *The Stranger* he received the distressing intelligence of the death of his second son, a youth whom he loved most affectionately. The play in consequence of this was deferred; and during the interval he had in vain endeavoured to calm the agitation of his mind. The success with which he performed the part called for a second representation, August 2d, 1798, in which he fell a sacrifice to the poignancy of his own feelings, and at which the audience were doomed to witness a catastrophe that was truly melancholy. In the fourth act Baron Steinfort obtains an interview with the Stranger, whom he discovers to be his old friend. He prevails on him to relate the cause of his seclusion from the world: in this relation the feelings of Mr. Palmer were visibly much agitated; and at the moment he mentioned his wife and children, having uttered (as in the character) "There is another and a better world!" he fell lifeless on the stage. The audience supposed for the moment that his fall was nothing more than a studied addition to the part; but on seeing him carried off in deadly stiffness, the utmost astonishment and terror became depicted in every countenance. Medical assistance was immediately procured; his veins were opened, but they yielded not a single drop of blood; and every other means of rescuscitation were had recourse to without effect. The gentlemen of the faculty, finding every endeavour ineffectual, formally announced his death, and his body was carried to his lodgings.

Mr. Aickin, the manager, came on the stage,

to announce the melancholy event to the audience, but he was so completely overcome with grief, as to be incapable of uttering a sentence, and was at length forced to retire without being able to make himself understood. Incledon then came forward, and mustered sufficient resolution to communicate the dreadful circumstance.—The house was instantly evacuated in mournful silence; and the people formed themselves into parties, contemplating the awful occurrence in the open square till a late hour next morning. Doctors Mitchell and Currie gave it as their opinion that he certainly died of a broken heart, in consequence of the family afflictions which he had lately experienced. The theatre was shut up on the occasion for three days, and the principal performers, together with several of the most respectable inhabitants of the town, followed the corpse in mournful silence to the neighbouring village of Warton, where it was interred. On his coffin was inscribed—"Mr. John Palmer, aged 53." He was however three or four years older; but there was no person in Liverpool who correctly knew his age.

Not long before his death his creditors had insured his life for 2000*l.* and he was appointed deputy manager at Drury-lane. He left behind eight children, who in the course of a few months had lost a father, mother, brother, and uncle! The managers of Drury-lane gave a full benefit for the orphans; and Mr. Colman with equal liberality announced the same at his theatre.

Palmer's professional powers were great and versatile, and highly advantageous to the stage. Nature had given him a majestic figure, with a cast of features very flexible and expressive. In elegant comedy he perhaps never had his equal;

but in tragedy we cannot speak of him in such unqualified terms. The weight and importance which is attached to a person of a fine and commanding deportment, rendered him very passable in tragic characters; he however could not be ranked as a great tragedian. His delivery of his text often shewed his want of education.

An actor may delineate the light airy conversation of comedy, without any solid acquirement; but the assumption of Shakspeare's serious heroes require a man of some erudition, and of a studious turn of mind, together with a most consummate knowledge of the passions, in order to depict a Macbeth, a Richard, a King John, or a Hamlet. In the support of these heroes, we certainly think he did not stand very high; yet his long acquaintance with the stage, and the possession of an easy elegance, which no man ever employed to more advantage, attached a moderate portion of respectability to his efforts in tragedy. It is said he was (what in the language of the theatre is called) a quick study; and from a confidence in this particular talent, he would defer the study of a part to the last moment, which often obliged him to personify a character in a very incorrect and slovenly way. In confirmation of this report we give the following anecdotes of him. When Mr. Murphy brought out his tragedy of *The Rival Sisters*, at the time the Drury-lane company were performing at the opera-house, Palmer left the study of his character and the prologue to almost the last moment. Resting, however, the fortune of the night, and his reputation, on his long experienced confidence, he suffered the curtain to draw up, without any apprehension of the unpleasant consequences that might have accompanied the neglect

of his duty to the theatre and public. Fortunately for Palmer, the house was much disturbed by some noisy auditors in the gallery, and while the audience were calling for silence, and requesting the disturbers to be turned out, he began to exhibit a few graceful attitudes, at the same time moving his lips, as if he were delivering his prologue. When the noise subsided, he ceased to speak, and expressed by the most artful action, that the disturbance had greatly embarrassed him. This made the audience more enraged with the people in the gallery, and while every body was calling for silence, the greater noise was produced, which Palmer employed to his own advantage, and again affected to finish his prologue, till the house was quiet, when he bowed and retired; and though not one of the audience had heard him speak, yet they all applauded him, and appeared fully satisfied that he had spoken a prologue. He almost knew as little of his character as he did of his prologue; but with the language of different authors, and the ease and elegance of his deportment, his defects were not generally noticed.

It is said, that at another time, when he had to speak a prologue, of which he scarcely knew a word, he had a toilet-table placed on the stage, as part of the furniture of the scene, under which Mr. Powell, the prompter, sat with a lamp, reading a line at a time, which Palmer repeated to the audience, while he filled up the little pauses of time with congees, attitudes, and respectful features; and retired laughing at the applause his exertions had obtained.

His eldest son, Mr. John Palmer, embraced his father's profession in 1791, and made his first appearance on the boards of the Hay-market:

theatre in the Prince of Wales, in Henry IV. —his father played Sir John Falstaff, and spoke an occasional address in character.—Mr. Palmer was employed at Drury-lane, and is now at the Hay-market theatre, where he has lately performed some characters of importance, and in which he has evinced a promising share of talent. He also stands before the public as the author of several favorite novels.

PALMER, ROBERT—Is brother of the preceding; was born in Sept. 1757, and acquired his scholastic knowledge at an academy on Brook-green, Hammersmith, and at a school in Hart-street, Covent-garden. At the early age of six he appeared as Mustard Seed, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, at Drury-lane, and was employed for some time as a page. His first character of consequence was Squire Richard, in the *Provoked Husband*, at Canterbury, in 1773. The next year he belonged to Mr. Yates's company, at Birmingham. In the latter end of 1774 he was employed at Drury-lane, in dances and pantomimes, for which, at the close of the season, Mr. Garrick was pleased to give him four pounds ten shillings, being about one shilling for each performance. In 1775 he was engaged by Mr. Foote, at the Little Theatre, Hay-market, at one pound eleven shillings and sixpence per week, and made his appearance in James, in *The Bankrupt*. Here he began to acquire fame, which led to his establishment at Drury-lane, at which theatre he has remained ever since, except the summers of 1792 and 1803.

In the season of 1784, the opera of the Lord of the Manor having been suddenly substituted for the play which had been announced, and as

Miss Farren was ill, and Mr. John Palmer not to be found, Miss Collett was called upon to read for the former, and Mr. R. Palmer for his brother. Unfortunately the play had never been published, and as the written parts could not be had, they were obliged to make use of the only manuscript copy. Mr. Palmer and Miss Collett, with each a candle in their hand, were to use the book alternately, and hand it to each other; the former, however, came to a passage so much interlined, that he could not proceed. The audience hissed most violently, upon which Mr. Palmer came forward, and requested that the book might be examined by any gentleman in the pit, to see if the fault could be attributed to him. The book was accordingly handed to a gentleman, who declared to the house, that it was absolutely illegible. The audience loudly applauded, and the book being returned, permission was granted to pass over the obscure passages. At the beginning of the third act, his brother, John Palmer, having come to the house to dress for the farce, resumed his part: Robert then took up the character of Crimp, which was regularly assigned to him, and the piece was concluded.

On the departure of his brother to the Royalty Theatre, he undertook his part of Joseph Surface, which had been refused by Messrs. Bensley and Brereton; and also succeeded Mr. Dodd in several of his parts. As a useful actor, Mr. Palmer is entitled to praise.

PARSONS, Mr.—This great and universally admired comedian, was the son of a carpenter, and born in Bow-lane, Cheapside.—He was educated at St. Paul's school, and at the age of fourteen put apprentice to a builder in Paternoster-row.

An early acquaintance with the theatre soon withdrew his mind from the profession his parents wished him to pursue, and he first appeared upon the boards of the Edinburgh theatre, according to the best authority we have been able to get, in the year 1758. At first he personified scarcely any thing but trifling characters in tragedy; but in the course of a season or two, he got possession of old men in comedy, a line of character which better suited his figure, feelings, and cast of features. In the support of these parts he soon distinguished himself, and his fame having reached Mr. Garrick, he and his wife were engaged for Drury-lane, where they made their first appearance in 1763, he as Filch, and Mrs. Parsons (whose abilities did not rank above mediocrity) as Mrs. Peachum. He had so enriched the character by his dress, and the peculiar knowing vulgarity of manner which accompanied the delivery of his author, that his talents promised to be of considerable use to Mr. Garrick's property. His line of business not interfering with that of the manager's, he was both encouraged and instructed by Mr. Garrick; and in order to avail himself of these instructions, he declined all summer engagements in the country. After the death of Mr. Garrick he joined Mr. Colman's company at the Hay-market, and was many seasons the chief support of that theatre. He died Feb. 1795, and was attended to the grave, at Lea, in Kent, by the present Mr. Colman, and several principal performers.

He buried his first wife some years before his death, and married a lady who was also an actress. By her he had two sons, the eldest of whom died very young. He left a handsome property to his wife and son, whose fortune (if he died before

21) reverted to his mother, who was sole executrix of her husband's will. Soon after the demise of Mr. Parsons she married a clergyman and schoolmaster, under whom her son was brought up. This divine, not strictly adhering to the precepts of those doctrines his professional duty compelled him to promulgate, sent the boy to the East Indies, much against the inclination of himself and mother, where he soon died; in consequence of which the clergyman's property received a considerable augmentation, which, with the fortune of his wife, was shortly dissipated. When there was no further prospect of gaining any additional property by his alliance with Mrs. Parsons, it is said he deserted her; and she is now left in very indifferent circumstances, to lament the indiscretion of a hasty marriage.

The person and features of Mr. Parsons, were of the most happy form for the profession of a comedian in that line of character in which he was so singularly eminent. His face was long, and possessed astonishing flexibility: his eyes were dark and large, and what constituted the great merit of his countenance, was its power of expressing every passion with which comedy abounds. He did not, like a buffoon, make faces and distort his countenance, to entertain a few barren spectators: every movement of a muscle expressed the feelings of the sentiment he was about to deliver. His face alone did not play; his whole frame supported a correspondent motion with the passion his countenance so intelligibly communicated to his audience.

Among the variety of characters of which he was a most excellent representative, his Old Foresight, in *Love for Love*, claims our particular notice. It was the most finished piece of acting

ever seen on any stage;—the tottering knee, the sudden stare, the plodding look, nay, the taking out of his handkerchief, evinced such a perfect knowledge of man in his dotage, that we despair of ever again seeing any thing at all approaching it:—it was perfection without a shade. Sir Fretful Plagiary, in the Critic, is a character in which he stood alone: all the peculiar feelings of the portrait he delineated in the most masterly style. The jealousy of fame, and love of praise, as worked into existence by the compliments and satire of Sneer, were coloured so perfectly, and heightened by the rich expression of his countenance, that we lament so much excellence is lost for ever to the stage. His Doiley, in the farce of *Who's the Dupe?* is equally entitled to our admiration and eulogium; and we never see the piece now represented, but we feel the loss of Mr. Parsons. In vain did we look for a shadow of his merit in Suett, and in vain may we expect to find it in Matthews, who is not even successful in Suett's characters.

In private life Mr. Parsons was greatly esteemed, for his gentlemanly demeanour and his excellent companionable qualities. He was a well-read man, and possessed a great depth of penetration on almost any subject on which he spoke. He was also an artist of considerable merit, and sunk a large sum of money in pictures. Our English Claude, Wilson, was his favourite landscape-painter, whose style of painting he copied with great success.—When his pictures were sold at Christie's, many of his own works brought good prices.

PENLEY, Mr.—Is brother to the person who is manager, in conjunction with a Mr. Jonas, of

a country company at Lewes, in Sussex, and various other towns in that county, besides attending at Bartholomew-fair, in London. The subject of this article has been several years on the stage, and a favourite performer at Weymouth, where the Queen took a fancy to his infant daughter, and has taken her under her gracious protection. He made his first appearance last season at Drury-lane theatre in the character of Scrub, in the *Beaux Stratagem*, and was favourably received. Of his performance we cannot speak very favourably:—it augured no extent of talent, nor any depth of reflection, on the nature of the character. Scrub is a part that must be performed without any seeming exertion: it is in itself so rich, that it will play itself. Weston's performance is described to have been perfectly simple, and not in the least assisted by any appearance of art. That natural display of ignorance and artless cunning, which characterized his personification of Scrub, was obviously wanting in Mr. Penley's representation. He laboured too much to be whimsical. Any one could see that he was *endeavouring* to be over comic, till all sight of the character was absorbed in the possession of the self-gratification of being droll. He afterwards assumed the late Mr. Collins's character in the *Honey Moon*, and acquitted himself extremely well. What with his figure being small, and his dress, he looked and spoke very much like Collins.

Mr. Penley has since personified the part of Walter, in the play of *The Curfew*, and it is but justice to say, that he supported his author with great effect. We have not seen him in a sufficient variety of characters to determine the precise quality and value of his powers; but

though he may not possess talents equal to the first line of low comedy, yet we think he will be found useful in the under departments of the drama.

POPE, Miss—This amiable woman, who has been on the stage upwards of forty years, is a native of London. She made her first appearance on the Drury-lane boards at a very early age, having performed when a child the character of the Fine Lady, in *Lethe*; Miss in her Teens, *Lilliput*, *Mrs. Frail*, &c. On the 27th of Sept. 1759, she made her first regular *debut* in the part of *Corinna*, in *The Confederacy*, and was received with the most flattering tokens of public approbation, which procured her an engagement which she has retained ever since:—an instance of steadiness scarcely to be paralleled in the annals of the theatre. There is an anecdote respecting Miss Pope's second performance of *Corinna*, which, as it holds out a highly useful and impressive lesson to all young performers, we feel ourselves called upon to relate. On the second night of our heroine's sustaining the character, the celebrated Mrs. Clive, then in the zenith of her fame, called her into the green-room, before she went upon the stage, and with great affability addressed her to the following effect: "My dear Pope," (this tender appellation, by the bye, was a very great condescension to come from a lady of Mrs. Clive's character) "you played peculiarly well on Saturday night, considering that you are as yet but a novice in the profession. Now take a piece of advice from me. You acted on Saturday with great and merited approbation; yet be not surprized when I tell you, that to-night you must endeavour to

act better; and yet, at the same time, make up your mind to meet with less applause; for if you suffer your young heart to be too sanguine, and place too much dependance on the caprice of public commendation, and should find your hopes disappointed, you will foolishly let it cast a damp over your spirits, and thus, instead of *improving*, you will *sink beneath yourself*. Therefore take my advice for your future progress. The violent thunder of applause which crowned your first appearance last Saturday, was not in strict justice *deserved*. It was only benevolently *bestowed* by the audience, to give you the pleasing information that they were well satisfied with your efforts. You must, therefore, consider it as an earnest of their wishes that you will, by your future exertions, merit the distinguished kindness they have manifested towards you."

The practical excellence of this advice must immediately present itself to every intelligent mind, and is well entitled to the most serious attention of every young performer. It was not thrown away upon Miss Pope, who increased in her exertions, and gained rapidly upon the public favour. On the secession of Mrs. Clive, she succeeded to several of that lady's characters, always appearing with increasing reputation. Her *forte* is avowedly low comedy; but in this field she takes an ample range, and is peculiarly happy in her delineation of antiquated spinsters, pert chamber-maids, &c. Her Mrs. Malaprop, in *The Rivals*, together with her Duenna, in the celebrated opera of that name, are admirable specimens of acting, and possess sterling merit—the genuine *vis comica* of the old school, distinguished for rich humour without grimace and buffoon-

ery. Miss Pope is one of the few classical performers of the present day.

In private life Miss Pope is not less amiable and meritorious than in her public character. She possesses a liberal heart glowing with expanded philanthropy—a mind vigorous and comprehensive. Her powers still retain their pristine excellence, and whenever she makes her appearance on the stage, she is always hailed with that warmth of applause, which bespeaks her a deserving and acknowledged favourite. She resides with her brother, a dancing-master in genteel practice, in Great Queen-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields.

POPE, ALEXANDER—This gentleman is a native of Cork, in Ireland, and applied himself early to the art of painting, in which he is at present reckoned a proficient. Merely to try his theatrical abilities, having been much attached to the stage, he performed Oroonoko and some other parts at Cork, when his success procured him an engagement at Covent-garden, where he made his *debut* in Oroonoko, in 1784, and repeated the character several nights with great applause. On the death of Mr. Henderson, and the secession of Mr. Holman, he was for a few seasons the principal tragedian; but on the return of Mr. Holman to the theatre in 1799, Mr. Pope went to Edinburgh, where he became a great favourite. After a short absence, he resumed his situation at Covent-garden, which till 1801-2 he retained, both with credit to himself and advantage to the theatre. The cause of his dismissal was unknown; but he soon after, upon application to the managers of Drury-lane, pro-

cured an engagement for himself and second wife, Miss Campion; where he continued in support of the first line of the drama till Mr. Elliston was engaged at that theatre. He soon afterwards returned to Covent-garden, where he sustains a very respectable line of business.

His figure is in every way well-formed; but his features, though regular and pleasing as a private gentleman, are not so well calculated for the stage. By the constant contraction of his brows, his eyes cannot emit that variety of passion necessary to great professional excellence. The playfulness of the eye, the dilation of the brows, together with judgment in their use, constitute one of the great properties in an actor. Mr. Pope, however, compensates for this physical defect, in possessing good natural talents, which are under the regulation of a well-formed judgment and cultivated taste. His personification of Henry the Eighth claims our particular notice and approbation. He imparts every appropriate feeling to the character, which he renders by his excellent performance more than commonly prominent in that drama. Othello, Lord Townley, and a great variety of other characters, meet with a very able representative in this gentleman.

Mr. Pope ranks very high as a portrait-painter, and exerts his pencil under the patronage of a considerable portion of our nobility. He has lately married the accomplished Mrs. Wheatley, late widow of a celebrated artist of that name.

POPE, Mrs.—This lady's maiden-name was Young, and first wife to the preceding; she was born in 1740, and was in her early years apprenticed to a milliner. The talents of Miss

Young attracting the notice of a friend, he introduced her to Mr. Garrick about the year 1768. Her features were never very expressive; her figure, however, was graceful, and her deportment elegant. Garrick thought her powers pointed at Imogen, but she did not then look sufficiently juvenile, and he humorously observed that he was at some difficulty to say what should be done for his *Old Young*. She played two seasons at Drury-lane; but either her merits were not felt by the public, or the manager; for she soon afterwards quitted London for Dublin, where, in 1770, she performed at the theatre in Capel-street. There the present Mr. Lewis acted with her, and pronounced her talents to be such as must eventually replace her upon a London theatre. By this excursion Miss Young had considerably improved herself, was a ready and versatile actress, and Mr. Garrick sent Mr. Moody to Dublin to offer her a *carte-blanche*. With Moody she settled a new engagement, and returned to London in estimation and competence. After remaining eight years at Drury-lane, the very high offers of Mr. Harris induced her to settle at Covent-garden theatre, where for the last eighteen years of her life she was constantly before the town, playing with, and against, some of our greater actresses, nearly equalling them in particular parts, and excelling them in a wider scope of character.

In 1784, during a professional excursion in Ireland, she saw Mr. Pope perform at Cork, and approved so much of his powers, that she recommended him to Mr. Harris; and his success at Covent-garden justified her opinion of his talents. A mutual affection arose from this circumstance, and in a season or two afterwards they

were married. In a wide range of characters in tragedy and comedy, and in the humorous as well as the fashionable walks of the latter, she was uniformly distinguished with applause.

In her claims to universality she did not yield to Mr. Garrick. Her virtues in private were equal to her merits in public. She was esteemed by those who had surveyed her journey through life, as "a good child, a good wife, a good friend, and a good woman." She died March 15, 1797, and was interred in Westminster-abbey.

PORT, Mrs.—The maiden-name of this lady was *Campion*. She was born in the city of *Waterford*, in *Ireland*, where her father, whom she lost at an early age, was a respectable merchant, but who died without having been able to make any provision for his wife and two daughters. This, the elder sister, was taken care of by a relative, who, in consequence of the pleasure she evinced in reading dramatic productions, permitted her to visit the *Waterford* theatre on the representation of one of her favourite tragedies. This increased her attachment for the stage, and she now became an avowed candidate for theatrical fame.

Her relation, finding dissuasion in vain, wrote to Mr. *Daly*, the manager, then in *Cork*, who referred the lady to Mr. *Hitchcock*, his agent and prompter. A day was fixed on to give her a hearing. She and her relation attended, and Mr. *Hitchcock* supposing the latter to be the candidate, requested her to proceed; but on finding his mistake, told Miss *Campion* she was too young at present to undertake the profession, and advised her to postpone the attempt for a few years. "Ah, Sir, but hear me!" cried the

young lady, in such a moving theatrical tone, detaining him by the skirt of his coat, that the request was immediately granted. So pleased was Mr. Hitchcock with the specimen she gave of her abilities, that he strongly recommended her (young as she was) to Mr. Daly; and in 1792 she made her first appearance, in *Monimia*, in *The Orphan*, at the theatre in Crow-street. On the approach of the night timidity had almost subdued her resolution; she was in violent hysterics in the green-room, and when the play was begun, absolutely declared her incapacity to appear before the audience. The stage having waited for her some time, and the audience becoming clamorous, Mr. Hitchcock advised her to look at the spectators from behind one of the side-wings, in order to familiarize herself to the sight of them. She approached accordingly for the purpose, when Mr. H. immediately pushed her on the stage, and left her there. The plaudits which she received only tended to increase her fears, and she fainted away in the arms of Mr. H. who, apprehensive of her danger, was kindly attending. After various struggles, she at last found utterance, and the tender manner in which she delivered her first speech, drew repeated plaudits, and she went through the character to the entire satisfaction of the audience, the astonishment of the manager, and delight of her friends. She afterwards appeared in several other parts with so much success, that she was the heroine of the Irish stage. On the expiration of her articles with Mr. Daly, she was engaged by Mr. Jones, for the private subscription theatre in Fishamble-street, where she played a variety of characters in tragedy and comedy.—She was then engaged at York, where she as-

sumed the name of *Spencer*, at the request of some of her relations.

Having played next at Liverpool, she returned to the Dublin theatre, where Mr. Lewis was then performing, and he was so pleased with her performance, that he procured her an engagement at Covent-garden, where she made her *debut* Oct. 13, 1797, in the character of Monimia, which she repeated three nights, and afterwards played Cordelia, Indiana, Jane Shore, &c. with the highest approbation.

She was married to Mr. Pope, Jan. 24, 1798, who had been a widower about ten months. She died in 1803.

PORTER, Mrs. MARY—This celebrated actress lived in great public estimation in the beginning of the eighteenth century. She was of good family, but having lost her parents when very young, she was cast upon the world, to seek the best means of support that presented themselves to her. We first hear of her theatrical pursuits at Bartholomew-fair, where she performed the Fairy Queen, which so pleased Mr. Barry and Mrs. Bracegirdle, who were present, that upon their report of her talents to Mr. Betterton, she was admitted into the theatre, and treated with tender indulgence. This was the first step to fame and fortune, both which she soon acquired. She lived at Heywood-hill, near Hendon. After the play she went home in a one-horse-chaise. Her constant companions were a book and a brace of horse-pistols.

The dislocation of her thigh-bone was attended with a circumstance that deserves to be recorded. In the summer of 1731, as she was taking the air in her one-horse chaise, she was stopped by a

highwayman, who demanded her money.' She had the courage to present one of her pistols to him: the man, who perhaps had only with him the appearance of one, assured her that he was no common thief; that robbing on the highway was not to him a matter of choice, but necessity, and in order to relieve the wants of his poor distressed family. He informed her at the same time where he lived, and told her such a melancholy story, that she gave him all the money in her purse, which was about ten guineas, and the man left her. Upon this, she gave the lash to the horse, and he suddenly starting out of the track, the chaise was overturned, and occasioned the dislocation of her thigh-bone. Notwithstanding this unlucky and painful accident, she made strict inquiry after the robber; and finding that he had not deceived her, she raised amongst her acquaintance about sixty pounds, which she took care to send him.

Mrs. Oldfield and Mrs. Porter rose gradually to excellence and fame much about the same time. They conversed together on the best terms. Porter's gravity was a contrast to the sprightliness of Oldfield, who would often, in jest, call her *mother*.

POWELL, WILLIAM—Was an actor of some celebrity in his day: he made his first appearance at Drury-lane in 1763, in the character of Philaster. He had been introduced to Mr. Garrick by his friend, Mr. Holland, two or three months before the manager went to Italy, and being approved, was instructed in the above part. His success was so great, that this tragedy brought crowded houses during that season. He then appeared in several other characters; but for

want of sufficient study and attention, his execution was not always adequate to his feelings. In 1767 he was admitted to a fourth share of the theatre-royal Covent-garden; for which, by the help of his friends, he paid 1500*l.* and opened that season with an occasional prologue, wherein he declared himself an adventurous manager.

At that time he was bound in an article to the managers of Drury-lane theatre for three years, in a penalty of 1000*l.* He was also one of the managers of the new theatre, Bristol, where he went to perform with his summer-company. He died after a severe illness in July 1769. He was buried in the college-church, at Bristol, with great funeral honours, attended by the Dean and whole choir, who sang an anthem on the mournful occasion. He was much esteemed, both as an actor and a private gentleman.

POWELL, Mr.—This gentleman commenced the profession of an actor at an early age, being scarcely seventeen when he made his *debut* in *Don Felix*, in *The Wonder*, at Lyme, in Dorsetshire, under the auspices of Mr. Hughes, the present Weymouth manager. Meeting with a favourable reception, he obtained an immediate engagement, and from Lyme proceeded to Weymouth, Exeter, &c. following the fortunes of the manager in that circuit for three years. He then joined the Salisbury company, where he also continued three years, taking the lead in genteel comedy. On the recommendation of Captain Dawson, then Master of the Ceremonies at the New Rooms, Bath, he was engaged by Mr. Palmer, and made his *entré* on the Bath stage, in the part of Lovewell, in the *Clandestine Marriage*; and his reception was every way commensurate to his

abilities, and rendered him a decided favourite with the public. After a short stay at Bath he joined the York company, where his reception was flattering, and ensured him the first line of business in tragedy and comedy.

After passing four seasons with increasing reputation at York, he received lucrative overtures from the Norwich manager, which he accepted. It was during his engagement in the above neighbourhood that he attracted the notice of Mr. Smith, the celebrated comedian, who was so pleased with Mr. Powell's acting, that on the much lamented death of Mr. John Palmer, he wrote to Mr. Sheridan, recommending Mr. Powell in the strongest terms, as a successor to that performer. This recommendation is the more honourable to Mr. Powell's talents, as it was not only without any solicitation on his part, but without his having even the slightest personal acquaintance with the writer. In consequence of Mr. Smith's report, Mr. Powell was engaged for three years, and made his *debut* on the metropolitan boards Oct. 20, 1798, in the character of Don Felix, in *The Wonder*; and Young Wilding, in the farce of *The Liar*. The same unqualified success which marked his former career, crowned his efforts on the present occasion, and established his reputation.

In consequence of Mr. Aickin's secession from the stage in 1801, Mr. Powell succeeded to that gentleman's cast of parts. The vacancy occasioned by that event, likewise afforded him an introduction to the summer-theatre, where he supplied Mr. Aickin's place the season of the above year. The person and features of this gentleman have their due proportion of regularity and expression, which are requisites of the utmost

advantage to the heroes of the sock and buskin. As an actor he certainly claims public approbation, for his able support of Captain Absolute, in *The Rivals*; Stockwell, in *The West-Indian*; Prospero, in the *Tempest*; and Thoroughgood, in *George Barnwell*. His performance of these, and a variety of other characters, evinced a perfect knowledge of his authors, and an ability to delineate them in just but animated colours.

The King, in *Hamlet*, is considered by the generality of performers to be unworthy of their notice; hence it is that we see it, with a very few exceptions, given to a third-rate actor. Mr. Powell has shewn, however, by his excellent support of it, that the character is not wholly unworthy of respectable talents. His dignified assumption of the monarch, not only adds reputation to his professional character, but greatly increases the effect of the play. The veteran Moody, it is said, told Mr. Powell that the play of *Hamlet* never had such a King during his knowledge of the stage; which was a compliment we think Powell's performance very justly deserved. We cannot but express a wish that Mr. Kemble would use his authority, and assign the part of the King to some gentleman whose figure and deportment would attach a consequence to the character, and give a due interest to the whole of the play. In a drama in which a character is deeply concerned through almost every scene, it is absolutely necessary that it should be supported by a good actor. Though the character may want a brilliancy of colouring, and be shaded with some vice, that exhibits it in no very favourable point of light to the audience; yet, if rendered heavy and unimportant by its representative, portions of the play will become a dead letter.

with the public, and leave the imagination to wander upon other subjects foreign to the interest and connexion of the piece, which ought to be kept up in every part.

This is precisely the case with the play of Hamlet, when the King is personated by an actor whose figure, dress, and deportment are defective in the support of dignity, and whose manner of delivery is unimportant; then the illusion which ought to attach to such an ideal personage as a king, is lost; and though he was intended to produce gravity and attention, he only excites his audience to laughter, and distracts the mind from the more interesting scenes of the piece.

It is time this silly prejudice among performers was removed by the authority of the managers. If, as actors say, the King is a wretched, unprofitable character to play, the merit is the greater in him who can give importance to a *trifle*. Mr. Powell has done this; he has raised the character above its ordinary standard, and with him it appears a part of which other performers might very justly envy his possession. We will venture to affirm, that if Mr. Cook or Mr. Pope were to give their attention to the King, he would stand before the public in a new and superior light, and the play would give, with such support, greater satisfaction to the public.

POWELL, Mrs.—This beautiful woman and esteemed actress, was born at Cranbrook; but her birth proved fatal to her mother, who died in childbed. Her father, a serjeant in the army, brought her up as well as his scanty means would permit, till her eleventh year, when he a second time entered into the married state. He chose for his companion a woman of a very fierce and

ungovernable disposition ; and from this period, the subject of this article became the child of sorrow and misfortune, experiencing the most cruel and unnatural treatment from her step-mother, who inhumanly turned her out of doors. The ill treatment of this woman may in a great measure be said to have paved the way to our heroine's future misadventures ; yet Mrs. Powell has, greatly to her honour, supported her in ease and comfort for nearly sixteen years.

Driven from her paternal roof without money or friends, she wandered about seven miles distant from her home, where on inquiry she heard of a place at an inn, and was immediately hired, without any recommendation but that of an honest countenance. Here she continued about a year, giving general satisfaction, and leading an irreproachable life ; when fate conducted a young officer to the inn, possessed of engaging manners and many personal recommendations ; which qualities he successfully employed in obtaining her affections and person.

The scenes of rapture which their mutual love had produced, lasted but for a short time, as the regiment to which our gallant youth belonged, received sudden orders to march at two in the morning ; and as separation was equally painful to both parties, it was agreed that our heroine should leave the inn at twelve, and join her lover on the road. This arrangement, however, was rendered abortive by the landlady, who had suspicion of our heroine's design ; and calculating (doubtless from experience) on the most probable means of thwarting its execution, sequestered the whole of her wardrobe, whilst our heroine, by way of carrying on the deception, had retired to bed, and on rising at the appointed time, she

found herself reduced to the dire alternative of either abandoning her enterprise, or performing the march in *puris naturalibus*. This, it must be acknowledged, was a cruel blow to her hopes; and, to add to her mortification, she had no opportunity or means of acquainting her lover with the miscarriage of her scheme; the faculty of committing her thoughts to paper not classing among the number of her acquirements; her economical step-mother having deemed the sum of two-pence per week to a day-school, too lavish an expenditure for one whom she considered rather as her slave than as her daughter.

We do not mention this circumstance, as conveying a reflection on our heroine; but rather as greatly redounding to her honour. Indeed, we consider it as the highest compliment we can possibly pay to the talents and genius of this interesting woman, that she owes her present professional excellence entirely to her own merit and exertions. Mrs. Powell is, in the strictest sense of the terms, self-taught, self-raised, and self-supported.

For a year or two after her arrival in London, she was neither able to write nor read. And what may well excite no small astonishment and wonder, the first book she ever ventured upon, was the most sublime and difficult perhaps of all English classics, Milton's *Paradise Lost*! The divine sentiments and lofty diction of that incomparable poem, struck her at once with admiration and with awe.—She determined to make herself mistress of its beauties, and in that view actually commenced her pupillage in the art of reading with that book; though, as it is said, she candidly acknowledges, weeks, nay, months elapsed, before she was able to decypher and comprehend a single line.

But to return from this digression—our heroine was compelled by the untoward circumstances already related, to keep her chamber, and heard the trumpet give the signal for marching, without the solace of a parting word, or even a look of farewell! With the return of day her mistress returned the least valuable part of her wardrobe, consisting of the dress in which she used to perform the drudgery of the house; but a whole month elapsed before she became possessed of her more gay and costly attire.

At the expiration of that period, the landlady, deceived by her apparent tranquillity into the belief that she had totally renounced all thoughts of an elopement, ventured to restore her entire stock of apparel; and that evening, equipped and bedizened in all her finery, she took French leave, and commenced her pilgrimage with a heart teeming with love, and sixpence in her pocket. After encountering a variety of difficulties, she at length reached the place of her lover's abode. The joy of the latter at again beholding and clasping in his arms the object of his idolatry, may be more easily conceived by souls susceptible of tender emotions, than described in words. They continued to live in uninterrupted harmony till the imperious call of honour summoned him to the field of Mars.

Without any settlement or provision, she was compelled by dire necessity to accept of the protection of a gentleman with whom she had been in habits of acquaintance as the friend of her departed swain, who, at her earnest request to return to service, bespoke the good office of a lady to give her a recommendation; and shortly after our heroine engaged herself as lady's-maid to a family at Chatham-place, Blackfriars, where

she lived two years. It was during her abode in this place that she first turned her thoughts to the stage. Not that she aspired at becoming herself an actress; but her whole soul, in consequence of witnessing the representation of the Grecian Daughter, was absorbed in the passion for theatricals. All attention to business, all order and regularity, were now suspended. The kitchen was metamorphosed into a stage, and nothing but hollow yells, and shrieks of murder, resounded from morn till night. On one occasion, in particular, this scene of fictitious destruction had like to have assumed the guise and hue of reality. The master of the house, alarmed with most hideous yells and groans, which seemed to proceed from the lower regions, ran down stairs to inquire the cause. On entering the kitchen he beheld, with no small astonishment, the cook, a tall brawny Yorkshire wench, sprawling on the floor, and our heroine standing over her in a menacing attitude, brandishing, for want of a *dagger*, a *ladle* in her outstretched hand. The poor cook had been persuaded to stand up as the representative of Dionysius, and in that capacity received a blow from the Grecian Daughter, which levelled her with the ground. Both performers underwent a severe reprimand, which produced at least this good effect upon the cook, that she solemnly vowed to have nothing to do in future with *Dionysius*, though she must have with *Grease*.

Our heroine, whose infatuation, instead of abating, acquired additional strength and energy from opposition, told her employers, in plain terms, that they were totally mistaken in their ideas—that they possessed no taste—that acting was not only a very harmless, but a very lauda-

ble occupation, and that they ought to think themselves honoured by having an opportunity of witnessing theatrical performances under their own roof. In this doctrine her master and mistress did not coincide, and she accordingly left her place.

Not very long after this event, she happened to be overheard whilst reciting a poetical composition, by a gentleman who possessed some influence in the theatre. He was so forcibly struck with her manner and apparent talents, that he declared with much confidence, she would with very moderate practice, make an excellent actress; and that he would instantly apply to the manager in her behalf. In vain did she expatiate on her want of education, and various other sources of incompetency. He persisted, and permission being granted by the elder Mr. Colman, she appeared in Alicia, in *Jane Shore*, in the year 1787. The manner in which she sustained the part was not more astonishing to those who were acquainted with her history, than to herself.

Her success was indeed beyond conception, considering the peculiar disadvantages under which she laboured. On the fall of the curtain, Mr. Colman stepped forward to congratulate her; but with the impression she entertained of her own demerits, worlds would not have tempted her to face him. She declared that "she had murdered the part," and would never set foot on the boards of a theatre again. For above a year she religiously kept her word; but the manager persisting in urging her to repeat the part, the thirst of praise at length triumphed over her resolution. She performed Alicia a second time the following season, with such increased applause, that the gentleman who first recommended her

to Mr. Colman's notice, determined not to rest till he had procured her a permanent engagement at Drury-lane, where she soon became a favourite of the public.

The summer subsequent to her appearance at the above theatre, she was engaged by Mr. Kemble for the Liverpool circuit. Here she married Mr. Powell, the present prompter of Drury-lane theatre, having, previous to the match, acquainted him with every incident of her past life. The honourable candour she manifested on this occasion, instead of abating, only added to the affection and regard he entertained for her; and for a series of years they continued to live in perfect harmony; till at length a variety of untoward circumstances involved them in pecuniary difficulties, which terminated in separation by mutual consent. But this separation, in its predominant features, wears a complexion totally distinct and different from the generality of similar occurrences. Not the smallest symptoms of rancour, pique, or animosity between the parties. In their intercourse with each other, which their respective situations at the theatre render very frequent, a spirit of mutual kindness and civility displays itself alike in look, in word, and in action. A spectator unacquainted with their history, would never suppose a separation to have taken place.

This lady's person is majestically beautiful; her face is remarkably handsome, and particularly expressive; she has a full mellow-toned voice, peculiarly adapted to the pathetic, and so flexible as to be capable of expressing with all imaginable force, the anger of the haughty resentful Hermione, or the maternal tenderness of the

grief-worn, dejected Andromache: her action, graceful and energetic, her deportment dignified and elegant, her judgment correct, and her pronunciation clear and distinct. In support of pathetic parts, she gives us unequivocal proofs that she is herself under the influence of the passion she counterfeits, and compels us to listen to her sorrow, and sympathize in her distress; indeed we with justice pronounce her the actress of nature. The violence of grief subdued by time, and despair softened down to a resigned and settled melancholy, are the leading traits in the character of Lady Randolph. Who can hear the harmonious lines:

"Ye woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom
"Accords with my soul's sadness," &c.

recited by Mrs. Powell, in the most pathetic strain imaginable, without immediately becoming, as it were, possessed with the grief which seems labouring in her heart? Who can command their feelings in the agony of despair, when she thus reproaches Old Norval?

"Inhuman as thou art, how couldst thou kill
"What waves and tempests spared?"

Again, when she discovers her long-lost son to be young Norval, she exclaims,

"'Tis he! 'tis he himself! It is my son!
"Oh sovereign mercy! 'twas my child I saw;"

with so much warmth, with such a glow of joy, that it is impossible to describe the sensation, the throb of pleasure it produces in the feeling heart. In how truly delicate, in how elegant a manner, does the poet convey his meaning, when he makes Lady Randolph say,

"I found myself
"As women wish to be, who love their lords."

And this lady delivers it in the happiest manner.

Mrs. Powell also claims our particular eulogium for her representation of Portia; the light and playful with Nerissa, the tender and affecting with Bassanio, and the impressive and dignified personage in the trial scene; indeed all the parts of the character are given with such excellent effect, that we are at a loss whether to give the palm to her comic or pathetic description.—Phocia, in the Grecian Daughter, is no ordinary effort of mimic action, and shews the energies of her mind, and the ability with which she turns her correct conception into practical and potent use, in giving all those niceties of tint and shade, which the character will admit. Milwood, in George Barnwell, must be also ranked among this lady's happy efforts. There are many other characters, if the limits of this work would admit our notice of them, on which we could dwell with satisfaction. We must not, however, pass over the Queen in Hamlet, which has been generally considered in a theatre an unfavourable part to an actress; yet Mrs. Powell has given it a new feature, and rendered the Royal Lady more interesting to an audience, from the importance her acting has attached to the character.

In private, it is said that Mrs. Powell unites a brilliant conversation with very engaging manners, and has a ready wit, which never offends, but gives vigour to the mirth of her company.

POWELL, Mr.—This gentleman was the son of the Cook to George the Second, and early in life entered into the sea service, in which he continued several years; and afterwards travelled over land to the East Indies. On his return to England, he became enraptured with the stage, and tried

his powers in a barn, with sufficient success to warrant a continuance of his favourite pursuit.

In the course of time, he obtained an engagement at Bath, where he was a great favourite with the inhabitants. He was discharged from that theatre in consequence of having absented himself without permission to perform at Salisbury.

In 1788 he performed at Covent-garden theatre, Sir Hector Strangeways, in the Romance of an Hour, for the late Mrs. Bernard's benefit ; and the following season, Mr. Harris engaged him to support the second rate old men in comedy, which he represented in a very chaste and excellent manner. On Wilson leaving the theatre, he was entrusted with many of his characters, and acquitted himself with satisfaction to the public. Though he did not rank among the first class of Comedians, he had considerable merit as a comic performer, and always appeared before the public with a perfect knowledge of his author. His private character was greatly esteemed, and he died in 1799, much regretted.

His wife, the present Mrs. Powell, late of Covent-garden theatre, but now of the Hay-market, is nearly related to Mr. Hoare the banker, and is sister to Mrs. Ward, now of the Manchester theatre, but formerly of Drury-lane. Mrs. Powell received a very good education, and in all respects was brought up as a lady of respectable connexions. She, however, indulged her partiality for the stage, and made her first appearance at Manchester, in Mrs. Malaprop, in *The Rivals*. Her efforts were attended with such flattering success, that she immediately entered into an engagement with the manager, Mr. Ward, and continued a member of his company eleven years.

In the year 1800 she came to London, and

appeared at Covent-garden, in the *Duenna*, with great success. She was engaged to assist Mrs. Davenport, and support her line of characters.—As an actress, Mrs. Powell was entitled to praise. She displays great judgment in whatever she delineates, and imports no indifferent share of richness without buffoonery.

Her private character corresponds with her professional exertions, both which have many claims to respect.

Since the above was written, Mrs. Powell is no more!—In consequence of a cancerous affection in her left breast, it underwent an amputation during the last winter (1806-7) at Manchester. The cure was not considered as complete by surgeons in London; and she has gradually declined in health ever since her return to London. Under extreme ill-health, however, she has supported her professional duties with surprizing spirits, till Sunday, August 16th, 1807, when she was confined to her bed, and expired in a few hours.

PRITCHARD, Mrs. HANNAH—Whose maiden name was Vaughan, was, when very young, recommended to the notice of Mr. Booth, who was exceedingly pleased with her manner of reciting several tragic parts; but not being then in the management of the theatre, advised her to apply elsewhere. Her first appearance was in one of Fielding's Pieces, at the Little Theatre, Haymarket. Her second attempt was in *Lady Diana Talbot*, in *Ann Boleyn*, at the play-house in Goodman's-fields; and soon after she acted at Bartholomew-fair, where she gained the notice and applause of the public by her easy, unaffected manner of speaking, and was greatly caressed and admired for singing a droll favourite air in some

farce. She now obtained an engagement at Drury-lane, and appeared in *Rosalind*, in *As You like it*; which at once established her theatrical character.

Not confined to any one walk of acting, she ranged through them all, and discovered a fund of merit in every distinct class: her tragic powers were eminent, but particularly in characters which required force of expression and dignity of character. When young, she was of a slim make, and though not a beauty, had a most agreeable face, with very expressive eyes: her deportment was easy and elegant, and her voice articulate and harmonious.

She came to the stage a married woman, and had a numerous family of children, whom she brought up with the greatest care and attention. After having trod the boards thirty-six years, in 1768 she resolved to retire, and spend the remainder of her life at Bath. To this she was tempted by the prospect of great advantages which were expected to accrue to her from a legacy of a Mr. Leonard, an Attorney of Lyon's-inn, a distant relation; of whose will, her brother, Mr. Vaughan, was the executor: but whatever might have been the intention of the testator by his will, the bulk of his estate fell to the heirs-at-law, who were nearer relations. She took leave of the public in the character of *Lady Macbeth*, when she spoke a farewell epilogue. Mr. Garrick played *Macbeth* on the occasion, and the house was crowded with people of the first distinction, at advanced prices.

She died at Bath about four months afterwards, of a mortification in her foot, at the age of fifty-seven, and left behind her a respected and unblemished name. A monument has been

erected to her memory in Westminster-abbey. Her daughter was an actress, and much admired.

Quick, Mr.—This excellent comedian was born in the neighbourhood of Whitechapel, where his father was an eminent brewer. At the age of 14 he left his parents, for the precarious life of a player, and joined a little strolling company in the vicinity of London, whose manager was the famous Oliver Carr, who boasted of having taught Garrick * to act, when he first made his appearance at Goodman's-fields.

At Fulham Mr. Quick commenced his theatrical career; and, for the first time, offered himself to public notice in the character of Al-tamont, in the Fair Penitent, which he personified so much to the satisfaction of the manager, Mr Carr, that he desired his wife, in the course of the play, to set young Quick down a whole share, which, at the close of the farce, amounted to *three shillings*.

In the counties of Kent and Surrey he figured away with great success; and before he was eighteen, performed Hamlet, Richard III. Romeo, George Barnwell, Jaffier, Tancred, and many other characters in the higher walks of tragedy. While he was in Kent, he and his brother adventurers made a halt at a country town, and put up at a small ale-house, as their place of residence during their performance.

* It is said that Carr dressed Richard in the same garments which were worn by Garrick, on his first appearance in that part at Goodman's-fields. This dress was held, by the strollers of his company, in high estimation; and as their wardrobe was not over-stocked, it was frequently used in comedy as well as tragedy.

Their appearance, however, not being much approved of by the landlord, he secured two large trunks, which contained the riches of the company, who intended to represent Macbeth on the following day. In the evening they all repaired to the barn to rehearse: at the same time the landlord was intent on observing their movements; and applying his ear to a crevice in the door, he heard the cry of the assembled witches of, "We'll fly by night;" on which the poor ignorant landlord instantly exclaimed, to the astonishment of the *Weird Sisters*, "Aye, aye, you villains, you may fly, but I'll be d——d if I hav'nt stopped your boxes."

One night old Carr, the manager, was dressed to perform Hamlet, at Croydon, and the hay-loft in which he exhibited contained a door, behind the scenes, which was about ten feet from the ground, and opened over a dung-hill that had been made up of a large quantity of human soil. Poor old Carr, who was generally in a state of intoxication, had mistaken this door for one of a better communication, and the first step instantly precipitated him into the filth, where he laid floundering for near an hour.

In a few minutes his presence was necessary to begin the play; but, to the surprize of every one behind the scenes, he was not to be found; and as the wind had shut the unlucky door, there was no suspicion of his having gone out that way. The audience presently became clamorous, and demanded a reason for the delay; when they were immediately informed by a performer, that Mr. Carr had suddenly vanished, and the most industrious search for him had proved unsuccessful; that they had sent to all the public-houses in the neighbourhood; but

could not hear any tidings of the manager. He then observed, that poor Mrs. Carr, who was to personate the Queen, had gone about the scenes to look for her dear husband, and had also vanished, though there was no probable way out but by the stage door, which had never been left all the evening. This address threw the audience into the utmost consternation and alarm: some persons said, that the players were the children of the Devil, and that his black Majesty had joined the company, to kick up capers with them; others observed, that it was a trick to cheat them out of their money, and not perform.

During, however, a whimsical scene of confusion, some of the spectators near the stairs up which they came into the theatre, cried out—a stink!—a stink!

This drew the attention of the company to the entrance of the house, when, to the astonishment of every one present, up came Hamlet and his wife, completely enveloped in the golden treasure of Cloacina's Temple; and being in the utmost paroxysm of rage at their ill fortune and filthy condition, they pushed through the audience to the stage, regardless of either the clothes of their company, or the delicacy of their olfactory nerves.

As soon as the confusion was a little appeased, old Carr came forward, and told the company, that though the Queen and himself had been *interr'd* before their time, he would, with their permission, begin the play, which he did, to the great entertainment of his rustic auditors; who, through every scene of the tragedy, exhausted their wit and jokes, at the expense of the manager and his company.

During Mr. Quick's theatrical travels, a whimsical dispute took place at St. Mary Cray, in Kent, between him and a brother actor, with respect to which of the two should be the first grave-digger in Hamlet. The contest was carried on even to the representation before the audience, in which the rivals took their stations opposite to each other in the grave; where, to the no small entertainment of the house, they chaunted the same ditty, and repeated the same part. At length, however, the good humour of the audience was exhausted, and opinions concerning the right of choice between the Thespian heroes were divided. Presently all was confusion and uproar, which at length subsided, on Quick's grappling the *skull*, which was a *sheep's head*, together with a *long beef marrow bone*: of these he kept possession until the entrance of Hamlet, whose gravity was not a little disturbed on the occasion.

An arch wag among the spectators, on Hamlet's saying to the skull, "Get thee to my Lady's chamber," said, "No, no, send it to little Quick's dressing-room."

But to pursue Mr. Quick's professional progress more immediately, it is necessary to observe, that in a few years he greatly distinguished himself as an actor of versatile talents; and his fame having reached Mr. Foote, he was engaged by that gentleman, for some of the minor parts of the drama. In this theatre, however, he remained without having an opportunity of shewing his talents to advantage, till Mr. Shuter, in June 1766, took an extra benefit, and asked Mr. Quick to perform Mordecai, in *Love-a-la-Mode*. Macklin, who was standing by, immediately encouraged him to take the part, and

promised to give instructions with respect to his manner of playing it. When Quick waited on Macklin to receive his instructions, he asked the young comedian whether he knew the *first* qualification of an actor, and immediately gave the precept, which was, *to be able to stand still*.

Quick closely adhered to the advice of his preceptor; and when he personified the Jew, Macklin expressed his high approbation of Quick's exertions, together with a prediction of his future excellence. Woodward and Shuter, who were present, took also particular notice of his performance, and warmly recommended him to Mr. Colman, who that year had become a patentee of Covent-garden theatre, and engaged him. For a season or two he was the fag of the theatre, and happy to get any of the characters which Woodward, Shuter, and Dunstall, either gave up, or objected to perform. At length an opportunity offered, which at once established Quick's consequence with the manager and the public.

Younger, the prompter, had seen him perform Mungo at Canterbury, with great success; and while arranging with Mr. Colman, the performers to represent the Padlock, he recommended Quick in the strongest terms; in consequence of which our young hero got the part instead of Mr. Dyer, to whom Mr. Colman first intended to give Mungo. His personification of the whimsical black procured considerable favour with the public, and laid the foundation of his future fame. The next character in which he displayed his comic powers to advantage, was Tony Lumpkin; and his assumption of it was not only highly satisfactory to the public, but the subject of Dr. Goldsmith's continued eulogium.

But the parts which most completely raised him to the class of our first-rate comedians, were Acres, and Isaac Mendoza, in Mr. Sheridan's *Rivals* and *Duenna*. After his personification of these, he obtained a choice of characters, and stood before the public as one of the leading performers of Covent-garden theatre.

He then became joint manager of the Bristol theatre; and there he married his present wife, who is the daughter of a respectable clergyman of that city, and by whom he has a son and a daughter, who have approached adult life, and who unite considerable accomplishments to personal endowments.

Some years before he left Covent-garden, he undertook the character of Richard the Third, for his benefit. It was his intention to make a *serious* attempt, but the public naturally expected a *comic* one, and finding his audience inclined to mirth, he indulged their humour, and gave them a complete burlesque, which met with general laughter and approbation. It is worthy of remark, that in the course of twenty years professional duty to the public and his manager, he was rarely out of play and farce; and during that number of years, but two apologies were made to the town on account of his ill health.

In the season of 1798, he felt, with the fatigues of his profession, his constitution very much shook; and after performing Major Oakly for Mrs. Mattocks's benefit, in May of the same year, he withdrew from the avocations of the theatre by medical advice, and retired to Cheltenham, where the salutary waters, and change of air, restored him to perfect health. Fearful of relapsing into the same indisposed state that the duties of Covent-garden theatre had brought

on, he resolved to try the effects of travelling, and accordingly visited, in a professional capacity, Edinburgh, York, Hull, Birmingham, and Liverpool; at all which places his exertions proved very lucrative to him.

In June 1806, he was engaged to perform at Cheltenham, and on his way thither the stage-coach was overturned, by which accident his arm was broke, and he was rendered incapable of proceeding on his journey. He is now perfectly recovered, and continues his professional excursions in various parts of England, with the most flattering success. It has been erroneously reported, that Mr. Quick had wholly abandoned the thought of returning to the London stage; on inquiry, we find, that whenever overtures are made to him, adequate to the importance of his services, he is ready to resume his public character on the boards of either of our metropolitan theatres.

In the hands of Mr. Quick, the characters sustained by the late Mr. Parsons and Mr. Suett, would receive an importance to which they have lately been unaccustomed in the hands of Mr. Mathews.

We have already mentioned several characters in which Mr. Quick stands unrivalled as their representative; and a very long list of others might be enumerated, in which he is equally great: in justice, however, to his professional character, we must be permitted to notice him in a few plays. The person of Mr. Quick is happily formed for a comedian; with features beaming with good humour, he has eyes particularly expressive of mirth, and a facetiousness of disposition. His personification of Justice Woodcock, in *Love in a Village*; Sancho

Panza; Sharp, in the Lying Valet; Barnaby Rattle; Doctor, in Animal Magnetism; and a great variety of opposite characters, are still recollected with pleasure, and we hope the unique powers of this excellent comedian will again adorn the boards of one of the winter theatres. If the public should not have that treat, the fault will not rest with Mr. Quick.

QUIN, JAMES—Was born in King-street, Covent-garden, Feb. 24th, 1693. His ancestors were of an ancient family in the kingdom of Ireland. His father, James Quin, was bred at Trinity-college, Dublin, from whence he came to England, entered himself of Lincoln's-inn, and was called to the bar; but his father, Mark Quin, who had been Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1676, dying about that period, and leaving him an ample estate, he quitted England in 1701 for his native country. His marriage was attended with circumstances which affected the interest of his son so materially, as probably to influence his future destination in life. His mother was a reputed widow, who had been married to a person in the mercantile line, and who left her, to pursue some traffic or particular business in the West Indies. He had been absent from her near seven years without her having received any letter from, or the least information about him. He was even given out to be dead, which report was universally credited. She went into mourning for him; and some time after, Mr. Quin's father, who is said to have then possessed an estate of 1000*l.* a year, paid his addresses to her, and married her. The consequence of this marriage was Mr. Quin: his parents continued for some time in an undisturbed state of happiness, when the first

husband returned, claimed his wife, and had her. Mr. Quin the elder, retired with his son, to whom he is said to have left his property.

Another, and more probable account is, that the estate was suffered to descend to the heir-at-law, and the illegitimacy of Mr. Quin being proved, he was dispossessed of it, and left to shift for himself. He received his education at Dublin, under the care of Dr. James, until the death of his father in 1710, when the progress of it was interrupted by the litigations which arose about his estate. It is generally admitted, that he was deficient in literature; and it has been said, that he laughed at those who read books by way of inquiry after knowledge, saying, that he read men—that the world was the best book. This account is believed to be founded in truth, and will prove the great strength of his natural understanding, which enabled him to establish so considerable a reputation as a man of sense and genius. Deprived thus of the property he expected, and with no profession to support him, though he is said to have been intended for the law, Mr. Quin had nothing to rely upon but the exercise of his talents, and with these he soon supplied the deficiencies of fortune.

The theatre in Dublin was then struggling for an establishment, and there he made his first essay. The part he performed was Abel, in *The Committee*, in 1714; and he represented a few other characters, as Cleon, in *Timon of Athens*; Prince of Tanais, in *Tamerlane*; and others, but all of equal insignificance. After performing one season in Dublin, he was advised by Chetwood, the prompter, not to smother his rising genius in a kingdom where there was no great

encouragement for merit. This advice he adopted, and came to London, where he was immediately received into the company at Drury-lane. It may be proper here to mention, that he repaid the friendship of Chetwood, by a recommendation which enabled that gentleman to follow him to the metropolis. At that period it was usual for young actors to perform inferior characters, and to rise in the theatre as they displayed skill and improvement. In conformity to this practice, the parts which Mr. Quin had allotted to him were not calculated to procure him much celebrity. He performed *The Lieutenant of the Tower*, in Rowe's *Lady Jane Grey*; the *Steward*, in Gay's *What-d'ye-call-it*; and *Vulture*, in *The Country Lasses*; all acted in 1715. In December 1716, he performed a part of more consequence, that of *Antenor*, in Mrs. Centlivre's *Cruel Gift*; but in the beginning of the next year we find him degraded to speak about a dozen lines in the character of the second player, in *Three Hours after Marriage*. Accident, however, had just before procured him an opportunity of displaying his talents, which he did not neglect.

An order had been sent from the Lord Chamberlain to revive the play of *Tamerlane* for the 4th of November, 1716. It had accordingly been got up with great magnificence. On the third night, Mr. Mills, who performed *Bajazet*, was suddenly taken ill, and application was made to Mr. Quin to read the part; a task which he executed so much to the satisfaction of the audience, that he received a considerable share of applause. The next night he made himself perfect, and performed it with redoubled proofs of approbation. On this occasion he was complimented by several

persons of distinction and dramatic taste, upon his early rising genius. It does not appear that he derived any other advantage at that time from his success.

Impatient, therefore, of his situation, and dissatisfied with his employers, he determined upon trying his fortune at Mr. Rich's theatre, at Lincoln's-inn Fields, then under the management of Messrs. Keene and Christopher Bullock, and accordingly in 1717, quitted Drury-lane, after remaining there two seasons. He continued at this theatre seventeen years, and during that period, supported with credit, the same characters which were then admirably performed at the rival theatre. Soon after he quitted Drury-lane, an unfortunate transaction took place, which threatened to interrupt, if not entirely to stop his theatrical pursuits; and which evinces that jealousy and rancour which are too prevalent in the theatrical world. This was an unlucky encounter between him and Mr. Bowen, which ended fatally for the latter. From the evidence given at the trial, it appeared that on the 17th of April, 1718, about four or five o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Bowen and Mr. Quin met accidentally at the Fleece tavern, in Cornhill. They drank together in a friendly manner, and jested with each other for some time, until at length the conversation turned on their performance on the stage. Bowen said, that Quin had acted Tamerlane in a loose sort of manner; and Quin in reply observed, that his opponent had no occasion to value himself on his performance, since Mr. Johnson, who had but seldom acted it, represented Jacomo, in the Libertine, as well as he, who had acted it often. These observations, probably, irritated them both, and the

conversation changed to another subject, not better calculated to produce good humour—the honesty of each party. In the course of the altercation, Bowen asserted that he was as honest a man as any in the world, which occasioned a story about his political tenets to be introduced by Quin, and both parties being warm, a wager was laid on the subject, which was determined in favour of Quin, on his relating that Bowen sometimes drank the health of the Duke of Ormond, and sometimes refused it; at the same time asking the referee, how he could be as honest a man as any in the world, who acted upon two different principles? The gentleman who acted as umpire, then told Mr. Bowen, that if he insisted upon his claim to be as honest a man as any in the world, he must give it against him.

Here the dispute seemed to have ended, nothing in the rest of the conversation indicating any remains of resentment in either party. Soon afterwards, however, Mr. Bowen arose, threw down some money for his reckoning, and left the company. In about a quarter of an hour Mr. Quin was called out by a porter sent by Bowen, and both Quin and Bowen went together, first to the Swan tavern, and then to the Pope's-Head tavern, where a rencounter took place; in which Bowen received a wound, of which he died on the 20th of April following. In the course of the evidence it was sworn, that Bowen, after he had received the wound, declared that justice had been done to him; that there had been nothing but fair play, and, if he died, he freely forgave his antagonist. On this evidence Mr. Quin was, on the 10th of July, found guilty of manslaughter only, and soon after returned to his employment on the stage.

Another accident of a similar nature happened to him (see Williams), and likewise his friend Ryan. The theatre in which Mr. Quin was established, had not the patronage of the public in any degree equal to its rival at Drury-lane; nor had it the good fortune to acquire those advantages which fashion liberally confers on its favourites, until several years after. The performances, however, though not equal to those at Drury-lane, were far from deserving censure. In the season of 1718-19 Mr. Quin performed in Buckingham's *Scipio Africanus*; and in 1719-20 *Sir Walter Raleigh*; and in the same year had two benefits: *The Provoked Wife*, on January 31st, before any other performer; and *The Squire of Alsatia*, on April 17th. The succeeding season he performed in Buckingham's *Henry IV. of France*; in *Richard II.* and *The Imperial Captives*. The season of 1720-21 was very favourable to his reputation as an actor. October 29th *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was revived, in which he first played Falstaff, with great increase of fame. This play, which was well supported by Ryan, in Ford; Spiller, in Doctor Caius; Boheme, in Justice Shallow; and Griffin, in Sir Hugh Evans, was acted nineteen times during the season; a proof that it made a very favourable impression on the public.

On the revival of *Every Man in his Humour*, in 1724-5, he represented Old Knowell; and it is not unworthy of observation, that Kately, afterwards so admirably performed by Mr. Garrick, was assigned to Mr. Hippisley, the Shuter or Edwin of his day.

At this time Lincoln's-inn Fields theatre had, by the assistance of some pantomimes, been more frequented than at any time since it was opened.

January 29, 1728, The Beggar's Opera was acted for the first time. It is said that when Gay shewed this performance to his patron, the Duke of Queensberry, his Grace's observation was, "This is a very odd thing, Gay;—it is either a very good thing, or a bad thing."—It proved the former beyond the warmest expectations of the author or his friends; though Quin, whose knowledge of the public taste cannot be questioned, was so doubtful of its success, that he cheerfully resigned the part of Macheath (see Walter). It was performed with astonishing success. Two years afterwards, March 19th, 1729-30, Quin had the Beggar's Opera for his benefit, and performed the part of Macheath himself, when he received the sum of 206*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* which were several pounds more than the common prices had produced any one night at that theatre; for the highest receipt during the run of the Beggar's Opera was 198*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* His benefit the preceding year brought him only 102*l.* 18*s.*; and the succeeding only 129*l.* 3*s.*

December 7th, 1732, Covent-garden theatre was opened, and the company belonging to Lincoln's-inn Fields removed thither. The play was The Way of the World: pit and boxes at 5*s.* each. So little attraction, however, had the new theatre, that the receipt of the house amounted but to 115*l.* In the course of this season Mr. Quin was called upon to exercise his talents in singing, and accordingly performed Lycomedes, in Gay's posthumous opera of Achilles, eighteen nights.

The next season concluded his service at Covent-garden; and in the beginning of the season 1734-5, he removed to the rival theatre, Drury-lane, on such terms as no hired actor had before

received. During Mr. Quin's connexion with Mr. Rich, he was employed, or at least consulted, in the conduct of the theatre by his principal, as a kind of deputy-manager. While in this situation he had a whole heap of plays brought him, which he put in a drawer in his bureau. An author had given him a play behind the scenes, which probably he lost or mislaid, not troubling his head about it. Two or three days after, *Mr. Bayes* waited on him to know how he liked his play: Quin made some excuse for its not being received, and the author desired to have it returned. "There," says Quin, "there it lies, on that table." The author took up a play that was lying on the table, but on opening, found it was a tragedy, and told Quin of his mistake. "Faith, then, Sir," said he, "I have lost your play." "Lost my play!" cries the bard. "Yes, by G—, I have," answered the tragedian; "but there is a drawer full of comedies and tragedies, take any two you will in the room of it." The poet left him in high dudgeon, and the hero stalked across the room to his Spa-water and Rhenish, with a negligent felicity.

From the time of Mr. Quin's establishment at Drury-lane until the appearance of Mr. Garrick, in 1741, he was generally allowed the foremost rank in his profession. The elder Mills, who succeeded Booth, was declining; and Millward, an actor of some merit, had not risen to the height of his excellence, which, however, was not, at best, very great; and Boheme was dead. His only competitor seems to have been Delane, whose merits were lost in indolent indulgence. He was a young tragedian from Dublin, who made his first appearance in London at Goodman's-fields.

Novelty, youth, and a handsome figure, took off from any severe criticism on his elocution and action. In short, though so far from the fashionable end of the town, he drew to him several polite audiences, and became in such a degree of repute, that comparisons were made between him and Quin; nor was he without admirers of both sexes, who gave him the preference. He was not insensible of this, and determined to leave Goodman's-fields, and indulge his ambition at one of the theatres royal. He engaged with Mr. Rich, at Covent-garden, about the time that Quin left it; and in two or three years gained that station which most of the other actors could not attain in many years. He was esteemed a just player, yet was remarkable for his violence of voice, which, especially in Alexander, pleased many; for the million, as Colley Cibber says, are apt to be transported when the drum of the ear is soundly rattled. But, on the contrary, Quin's solemn sameness of pronounciation, which conveyed an awful dignity, was charmingly affecting in Cato.

Delane was young enough to rise to greater perfection; Quin was then at the height of his: if Delane had the more pleasing person, Quin had the more affecting action; both might have appeared with greater advantage, if they had been on the same stage. They were the Cæsar and Pompey of the theatres, and one stage would have been incompatible with their ambition: Quin could bear no one on the footing of an equal—Delane no one as a superior. In the year 1735, Aaron Hill, in a periodical paper called *The Prompter*, attacked some of the principal actors of the stage, and particularly Colley Cibber and Mr. Quin. Cibber, according to

custom, laughed, but Quin was angry; and waiting on Mr. Hill, a quarrel ensued between them, which ended in the exchange of a few blows. Mr. Quin was scarcely settled at Drury-lane before he became embroiled in a dispute relative to Monsieur Poitier and Madame Roland, then two celebrated dancers, for whose neglect of duty it had fallen to his lot to apologize. It was insinuated in the papers, that Quin had with malice accused these dancers; but the manager, Fleetwood, by an advertisement, declared that Quin had acted in this affair in his behalf, and with the strictest regard to truth and justice. No further notice was taken of the business, and soon afterwards the delinquent dancers made their apology to the public, and were received into favour.

In the season of 1735-6, Mr. Quin first performed Falstaff, in the second part of Henry IV. for his own benefit: in 1736-7 he performed Comus, and had the first opportunity of promoting the interest of his friend Thomson, in the tragedy of Agamemnon. The following anecdote, illustrative of his sincere friendship for Thomson, cannot be here omitted. Hearing that this gentleman was confined in a spunging-house, for a debt of about seventy pounds, he repaired to the place, and having inquired for him, was introduced to the bard.

Thomson was a good deal disconcerted at seeing Quin, as he had always taken great pains to conceal his embarrassed state; and the more so, as Quin told him he was come to sup with him; being conscious that all the money he was possessed of would scarcely procure a good one, and that there was no credit in these houses. His anxiety upon this head was, however, removed, upon Quin's informing him, that as he supposed

it would have been inconvenient to have had the supper dressed at the place they were in, he had ordered it from an adjacent tavern; and, as a prelude, half a dozen of claret was introduced. Supper being over, and the bottle circulating pretty briskly, Quin said, "It is now time we should balance accounts." This astonished Thomson, who imagined he had some demand on him; and Quin perceiving it, continued:—"Mr. Thomson, the pleasure I have had in perusing your works, I cannot estimate at less than a hundred pounds, and I insist upon now acquitting the debt." On saying this, he put down a note of that value, and took his leave without waiting for a reply.

The season of 1738-9, produced only one new play, in which Mr. Quin performed, and that was *Mustapha*, by Mallet, which was said to glance both at the King and Sir Robert Walpole, in the characters of Solyman the Magnificent, and Rustan his vizier. On the first night of its exhibition, all the chiefs in opposition to the country were assembled, and many speeches were applied, by the audience, to the supposed grievances of the times, and to persons and characters. The play was, in general, well acted; more particularly the parts of Solyman and *Mustapha*, by Quin and Millwood.

In March 1739, Mr. Quin was engaged in another dispute with one of his brethren, Mr. Theophilus Cibber, who at that period, owing to some disgraceful circumstances relative to his conduct to his wife, was not held in the most respectable light. Quin's sarcasm on him is too gross to be here inserted. A duel was fought in the Piazza, Covent-garden, between these two actors; Quin having pulled Cibber out of

the Bedford coffee-house, to answer for some words he had used in a letter to Mr. Fleetwood, relative to his refusing a part in *King Lear* for Mr. Quin's benefit. Mr. Cibber was slightly wounded in the arm, and Mr. Quin wounded in his fingers. After each had their wounds dressed, they came into the Bedford coffee-house and abused each other, but the company prevented farther mischief.

In the season of 1739-40, there was acted at Drury-lane theatre, on the 12th of November, a tragedy, entitled, *The Fatal Retirement*, by a Mr. Anthony Brown, which received its sentence of condemnation on the first night. In this play Mr. Quin had been solicited to perform, which he refused; and the ill success which attended the piece, irritated the author and his friends so much, that they ascribed its failure to the absence of Mr. Quin, and, in consequence of it, insulted him for several nights afterwards, when he appeared on the stage. This treatment at length Mr. Quin resented, and determined to repel. Coming forward, therefore, he addressed the audience, and informed them, "that at the request of the author, he had read his piece before it was acted, and given him his very sincere opinion of it; that it was the very worst play he had ever read in his life, and for that reason had refused to act in it." This spirited explanation was received with great applause; and, for the future, entirely silenced the opposition to him. In this season he performed in Lillo's *Elmerrick*.

On the 1st of August, 1740, an entertainment of a peculiar kind was given by Frederick Prince of Wales, father of his present Majesty,

in the gardens of Cliefden, in commemoration of the accession of King George I. and in honour of the birth of the Princess Augusta, now Duchess of Brunswick. It consisted of the masque of Alfred, by Thomson and Mallet; the masque of the Judgment of Paris, and some scenes from Rich's Pantomimes, by him and La Lanze; with dancing by Signora Barbarini, then lately arrived from Paris. The whole was exhibited upon a theatre in the garden, composed of vegetables, and decorated with festoons of flowers; at the end of which was erected a pavillion, for the Prince and Princess of Wales, Prince George, his present Majesty, and Princess Augusta. The performers in Alfred were Quin, who represented the Hermit; Milward, Mills, Solway, Mrs. Clive, and Horton.

The next season, that of 1740-1, concluded Mr. Quin's engagement at Drury-lane. The irregular conduct of the manager, Mr. Fleetwood, induced Mr. Quin to relinquish his situation.

In the summer of 1741, Mr. Quin, Mrs. Clive, Mr. Ryan, and Mademoiselle Chateaufort, then esteemed the best female dancer in Europe, made an excursion to Dublin. Mr. Quin had been there before, in the month of June 1739, accompanied by Mr. Giffard, and received at his benefit 136*l*, at that time esteemed a great sum. On his second visit, he opened in his favourite part of Cato, to as crowded an audience as the theatre could contain. Mrs. Clive next appeared in Lappet, in the Miser; and Mr. Ryan came forward in Iago, to Mr. Quin's Othello. With such excellent performers, we may naturally suppose the plays were admirably sustained. Here Quin played Lord

Townley, in the Provoked Husband; Manley, Mr. Ryan; and Lady Townley, Mrs. Clive: he also played King Lear; Cordelia Mrs. Clive; and Comus, Euphrosyne Mrs. Clive. Mr. Quin, it seems, attended the Dublin company to Cork and Limerick, and the next season performed in Dublin, where he acted the part of Justice Balance, in the Recruiting Officer, at the opening of the theatre in October, on a government night. He afterwards performed a variety of other characters of the first cast in the drama with great applause, and to well attended houses.

The state of the Irish stage was then so low, that it was often found, that the whole receipt of the house was not more than sufficient to discharge Mr. Quin's engagement; and so attentive was he to his interest, and so rigid in demanding its execution, that he refused to let the curtain be drawn up until the money was regularly brought to him.

He left Dublin in February 1741-2; and on his arrival in London, he found the attention of the theatrical world entirely occupied by the merits of Mr. Garrick, who in October preceding had begun his theatrical career; and was then performing with prodigious success at Goodman's-fields. The fame of the new performer afforded no pleasure to Quin, who sarcastically observed, that Garrick was a new religion, and that Whitfield was followed for a time; but they would all come to church again.

In the season of 1742-3 Mr. Quin returned to his former master, Rich, at Covent-garden theatre, where he opposed Mr. Garrick at Drury-lane; it must be added, with very little success. But though the applauses the latter obtained from the public were not agreeable to

Mr. Quin, yet we find that a scheme was proposed, and agreed to, though not carried into execution, in the summer of 1743, for them to perform together for their mutual benefit, a few nights at Lincoln's-inn Fields theatre. On the failure of this plan Mr. Quin went to Dublin, where he had the mortification to find the fame of Mr. Sheridan, then new to the stage, more adverse to him than even Mr. Garrick's had been in London. Instead of making a profitable bargain in Dublin, as he hoped, he found the managers of the theatres there entirely averse to admit him.

After staying there for some time he returned to London, without effecting the purpose of his journey, and in no good humour with the new performers. The season of 1743-4 Mr. Quin passed without any engagement, but in 1744-5 he was at Covent-garden again. The next year was devoted to repose, whether from indolence or inability to obtain the terms he required from the managers, is not very apparent. Both may have united.

He had the next season, 1746-7, occasion to exert himself, being engaged at Covent-garden along with Mr. Garrick.

After one or two previous friendly meetings, they selected such characters as they intended to act, without being obliged to join in the same play. Some parts were to be acted alternately. Mr. Quin soon found that his competition with Mr. Garrick, whose reputation was hourly increasing, whilst his own was on the decline, would soon become ineffectual. His Richard the Third could scarce draw together a decent appearance of company in the boxes, and he was with some difficulty tolerated in the part,

having been one night *much hissed*, when Mrs. Cibber played the Queen for the first time ; but Garrick played the same character to crowded houses, and with very great applause.

At last these two great performers appeared together on the 14th of November 1746, in the tragedy of the Fair Penitent, and the shouts of applause when Horatio and Lothario met on the stage in the second act, were so loud and so often repeated, before the audience permitted them to speak, that the combatants seemed to be disconcerted. It was observed, that Quin changed colour, and Garrick seemed to be embarrassed ; and it must be owned, that these actors were never less masters of themselves than on the first night of the contest for pre-eminence. Quin was too proud to own his feelings on the occasion ; but Garrick was heard to say, " Faith, I believe, Quin was as much frightened as myself." The play was repeatedly acted, and with constant applause, to very brilliant audiences ; nor is it to be wondered at, for besides the novelty of seeing the two rival actors in the same tragedy, Calista was admirably played by Mrs. Cibber.

It was in this season that Mr. Garrick, produced *Miss in her Teens* ; the success of which is said to have occasioned no small mortification to Mr. Quin. He however did not think it prudent to refuse Mr. Garrick's offer of performing it at his benefit.

It was this season also, in which the *Suspicious Husband* appeared. The part of Mr. Strickland was offered to Mr. Quin, but he refused it ; and in consequence it fell to the lot of Mr. Bridgewater, who obtained great reputation by his performance of it.

In the season of 1748-9, having lost his friend

Thomson, he enlisted under the banners of Rich. On the 13th of January, 1749, Thomson's tragedy of *Coriolanus* was produced at Covent-garden, in which he played the principal character, and spoke Lord Lyttelton's celebrated prologue, which had a very happy effect. The sympathizing audience said, that then indeed Mr. Quin was no actor; but that the tears he shed were those of real friendship and grief.

Just before the performance of *Coriolanus* an honour had been conferred upon Mr. Quin, which he some years afterwards recollected with no small degree of exultation. On the 4th of January, *Cato* was performed at Leicester-house, by the direction of Frederick Prince of Wales, in which his present Majesty, Prince Edward, Princess Augusta, and Princess Elizabeth, acted the parts of Portius, Juba, Marcia, and Lucia. The instruction of all the young performers, and the management of the rehearsals, were given to Mr. Quin, and it is said he was afterwards rewarded with a pension for his services. It was intended that Lady Jane Grey should have been represented by the same performers, and accordingly that play was revived at Covent-garden in December 1750; but for some reason the intended exhibition at Leicester-house did not take place. When Mr. Quin heard of the graceful manner in which his Majesty delivered his first speech in parliament, he cried out, "Aye, I taught the boy to speak!" Prince Frederick, perhaps through the means of Thomson and Lyttelton, was a warm patron of Mr. Quin; the Prince generally used to attend his benefit; and the plays he commanded unless on some very particular occasions, were confined to Covent-garden theatre, in compliment to this actor.

This attention in his Royal Highness was so beneficial to Mr. Quin, that his salary in the last year of his performance, it is said, was equal to 1000*l*.

The season of 1750-1, opened with a very powerful company at Covent-garden, consisting of Mr. Barry, Mr. Cibber, Mr. Quin, Mrs. Woffington, Mr. Macklin, &c. The combined strength of this assemblage of theatrical talents alarmed Mr. Garrick so much, that he wished to detach Mr. Quin from the party; but having had the command at Covent-garden, he did not wish to be controlled by Mr. Garrick; he therefore continued with his old master Rich, upon higher terms than had ever been paid to any actor. His benefit was on the 18th of March, three days before the death of the Prince of Wales, by whose command, though he was not present at the performance, Othello was acted; Othello, Mr. Barry; Iago, Mr. Quin; and Desdemona, Mrs. Cibber. It is recorded, that notwithstanding the novelty of this change in the performance, Othello being Quin's usual part, the house was by no means a crowded one; on the contrary, it was very thinly attended.

On the 20th of May Mr. Quin performed Horatio, in the Fair Penitent, and with that character concluded his performance as an hired actor. He now put in execution his plan of retiring to Bath, but came to London the two succeeding years, to perform Falstaff for the benefit of his old friend Ryan. His last appearance on the stage was on the 19th of March, 1753, on which night the stage, pit, and boxes, were all at the advanced price of 5*s*. The next year, finding himself disabled in some measure, by the loss of his teeth, from renewing his

former assistance, he declined it altogether, saying in his usual blunt manner, "By G—d I will not whistle Falstaff for any body, but I hope the town will be kind to my friend Ryan; they cannot serve an honester man." He exerted himself, however, among his friends, and disposed of many tickets for him, and it is said, that to make up the loss of his annual performance, he presented his friend with no less a sum than 500*l*. By the retirement of Mr. Quin the stage sustained a great loss; the characters in which he particularly excelled, falling into the hands of actors whose talents were very inadequate to their proper representation. In his principal tragic parts he was succeeded by Sparkes, but in the character of Falstaff he left no representative.

While Mr. Quin continued on the stage there was no great intimacy between him and Mr. Garrick; but when all competition for pre-eminence had ceased, it was no difficult matter for them to unite on terms of friendship. Both of them often spent their summers at Chatsworth, the seat of the Duke of Devonshire; and one evening, being accidentally left by themselves, Mr. Quin made the first overture towards a friendly intercourse, by inquiring after the health of Mrs. Garrick, for which he expressed a very solicitous regard. After this his visits at Hampton were frequent. The last time was in the summer of 1765, just after Mr. Garrick's return from Italy. While at this seat of hospitality, an eruption came out on his hand, which the faculty seemed to fear would turn to a mortification, and occasion the loss of it. This circumstance affected his spirits, and is supposed to have thrown him into a hypochondria, which brought on a fever that car-

ried him off, when he was out of all danger on account of his hand. During his illness he had taken such quantities of bark, as to occasion an incessant drought, which nothing could assuage; and being willing to live as long as he could without pain, he discontinued taking any medicines for upwards of a week before his death; and during this period was in good spirits. The day before he died he drank a bottle of claret; and being sensible of his approaching end, he said, "He could wish that the last tragic scene were over, though he was in hopes he should be able to go through it with becoming dignity." In this hope he was not disappointed: he died at his house at Bath on Tuesday, January 21, 1766, about four o'clock in the morning; and on the Friday following was interred in the Abbey church at Bath, where a monument to his memory was erected, with lines by Mr. Garrick.

Mr. Quin's language in conversation was nervous, and his *bon mots* had a force in them that secured their remembrance long after their transitory effusion: but it must be owned, that many of the more very coarse, and offensive to decency.

In declamation, Mr. Quin was most excellent. It is said he recited with particular energy and judgment, but was unqualified for the striking and vigorous characters of tragedy. He gave true force and dignity to sentiment, by a well-regulated tone of voice, judicious elocution, and easy deportment. His chief characters were Brutus, Cato; the Duke, in *Measure for Measure*; and Falstaff. However, the exigencies of the theatre imposed upon him King Lear, Richard, Macbeth, Othello, Young Bevil, Chamont, &c.

At the age of sixty he performed Chamont in a long grisly, half-powdered wig, hanging low

down on each side the breast, and down the back; a heavy scarlet coat and waistcoat, trimmed with broad gold lace, black velvet breeches, black silk neckcloth, black stockings, a pair of square-toed shoes, with an old-fashioned pair of stone buckles, and a pair of stiff high-topped white gloves, with a broad old scolloped hat. Were the youthful Chamont to appear on the stage in such a dress now, the tragedy would cause more laughter than tears.

RAYMOND, Mr.—This gentleman was born on the 29th of March, 1771, in Strathspey, in the Highlands of Scotland; within a short distance from Culloden-moor, well known as the scene of the decisive battle between the partisans of the unfortunate House of Stuart and the English forces under the Duke of Cumberland. His father, a descendant of Ludovick Grant, an ancient Highland chieftain (and the head of one of the oldest and most powerful clans in that part of Scotland), was an officer in the army; and lost his life near Charlestown, in South Carolina, during the latter part of the American war. The widow being left with five children, the eldest of whom, our hero, had not attained his ninth year, removed with her young family from their small paternal residence in the Highlands, to the village of Inverkeithny, in the county of Banff; where James was placed at a classical seminary; and intended for the clerical profession, not as a minister of the *Kirk* of Scotland, but of what in that country is called the *Chapel*; a sect differing very little in doctrine and ceremonies from the Church of England.

At a proper age therefore, he was sent to King's College, in the University of Aberdeen; but it was probably from possessing a levity of

disposition, which did not well accord with a system of theological study and discipline, and not having the authority of a father to controul him, that his stay in this situation was very short; for after passing a single winter there, and in that period gaining a *burse* or buss (as the college prizes are called), he took leave of both college and school with this solitary mark of triumph, and would never afterwards return to either.

At an early period after he had left college, he went to sea in the capacity of a Midshipman, but the versatile state of his mind soon led him to relinquish the profession of a seaman. He had, however, resolution to accomplish a voyage to the East Indies; but was then too young to estimate justly the value of such a prospect as presented itself to him for the acquirement of independence. In his passage home he contracted an intimate friendship with a gentleman who had acquired a handsome fortune during a residence of twenty-five years in the East; by whose invitation he visited Ireland, where he enjoyed the attention and kindness of his new friend during the remainder of that gentleman's life.

Among the persons of taste and worth to whom Mr. Raymond became introduced in that country, was the late Edward Tighe, Esq. a gentleman of confessedly correct judgment as a critic, particularly in the line of the drama; and to whom the Right Hon. Monck Mason has dedicated his edition of that great but neglected genius, Massinger, and paid many just acknowledgements in his preface. Mr. Tighe was the school-fellow and friend of Garrick, and was allowed to be the best reader of plays in his time. Had

not Mr. Raymond heard the tragedy of Oroonoko read by this gentleman, it is likely he would never have thought of the stage as his profession : but the distresses of the sable prince were so pathetically delivered by Mr. Tighe, that they took immediate possession of Raymond's youthful mind, and from that moment he abandoned the idea of any other pursuit. In the course of a few weeks he appeared on the Dublin stage, under the auspices and instruction of his accomplished friend.

During his performance an unlucky accident occurred : in the most interesting part of the last act, the misery in which he saw his adored Imoinda, fixed itself with such strength in his tortured mind, that in a frenzy of love and despair, he applied his burnished cheek so closely to that of his unhappy princess, as to leave half of his sooty complexion on her fair face. This awkward blunder convulsed the house with laughter ; and it was some minutes before they could be restored to their proper tone of feeling, notwithstanding the solicitude which the embarrassment of the late Mrs. Pope, the heroine, excited in her favour. The play finished so much to the satisfaction of young Raymond and his intelligent friend, that he repeated the character several times.

After this successful essay of his theatrical powers, he assumed several of the first characters in tragedy, and soon became a favourite with the public. In the course of time he was deputed the acting manager by Mr. Daly, of whose conduct to him Mr. Raymond speaks in high terms of praise.

On Mr. Daly's abdication from the theatre, in 1797, our hero entered into an engagement

with his successor, Mr. Jones, with whom he remained two seasons, in the possession of the principal characters and public approbation.

During the summer vacation of the Manchester company, Mr. Raymond performed a few nights at Lancaster; where Mr. Grubb, one of the proprietors of Old Drury, happening to stop in an excursion to the Lakes, saw him perform, and engaged him for our elder metropolitan theatre, on the boards of which he made his first appearance early in the season of 1799, in the part of Osmond, in the *Castle Spectre*; and was received with the most flattering marks of approbation. Since that period Mr. Raymond, in his performance of the *Stranger*, *Penraddock*, *Rolla*, *Osmond*, *Octavian*, *Gloster*, *Macduff*, and in the general line of characters which call forth the stronger passions to their full extent, has displayed talents sufficiently prominent to place him in a distinguished rank in his profession. His figure is majestic, and his features flexible, and well calculated to delineate the sable story of the tragic muse.

Mr. Raymond is a gentleman of excellent private character, and ranks in no indifferent class in literature. He has written two tragedies: one is founded on the death of the unfortunate Lewis the Sixteenth; the other, intitled the *Indian Captive*, is taken from an incident in the *History of Hindostan*, and has been performed in Dublin with success. He is the author of the *Life of Dermody*, in two volumes, which has been deservedly noticed in terms of high approbation by most of the critical journals.

RAE, ALEXANDER W.—This promising young performer was born in London in May 1782.

and on the death of his father in 1787, was placed under the care of the Rev. W. Lloyd, of whom he received a classical education. While at school he evinced great taste and judgment in the public recitations: from this academic exercise perhaps first originated his passion for the stage. On leaving school, he was introduced to Mr. Campbell, an army agent, with whom he continued till that gentleman retired from public life, when Mr. Campbell very kindly made our hero liberal offers, if he were inclined to continue in the army agency, or accept an establishment in India. These offers of friendship Mr. Rae declined, from his increasing partiality for the stage, which he considered as his future scene of action.

Stimulated by these notions, he began his theatrical career at Bath, in January 1806, under the auspices of some of the first families at that place. At this theatre he displayed his inexperienced talents to very promising advantage, and received the most cheering encouragement from his elegant and enlightened auditors.

After a short residence at this fashionable place of resort, Mr. Cumberland became interested in his pursuits, and introduced him to Mr. Colman, who accepted of his services at the Hay-market theatre, where he made his *debut* on the 9th of June, 1806, in the character of Octavian. His reception was more than commonly flattering, and the applause he received was certainly merited.

Under the kind instruction of Mr. Colman, he ventured his powers in Sir Edward Mortimer, in the Iron Chest, and imparted to this arduous character, every appropriate feeling, which was fostered by the approbation of his audience. In

comedy he also distinguished himself: he personified Count Almaviva, in the Spanish Barber; and Felix, in the Hunter of the Alps; together with a variety of other characters, in various dramas, represented at that theatre.

Mr. Rae took the play of Hamlet for his benefit, and his delineation of the Prince of Denmark was far beyond mediocrity. It displayed the possession of powers which, if properly cultivated, will very shortly be an ornament to the metropolitan stage. His figure is elegant, and his features possess great intelligence and flexibility.

REDDISH, SAMUEL.—Was a member of the Drury-lane company about the year 1774. His quarrel with Macklin was much talked of in the theatrical world. In the course of his professional career, he was obliged to make an apology to the public for having appeared on the stage in a state of inebriation. He was considered a useful, but a violent actor; and met with some applause in the characters of Iago, Lord Hastings, &c. During his engagement in Dublin with Mr. Ryder, he appeared in the character of Castilio, in the Orphan; and in the heat of his acting wounded Polydore, who was personated by a Mr. Smith.

On the first mention of *coward*, Reddish did not wait for Polydore to repeat the words "Base born villain—coward!" but took his revenge. However, he soon recollected himself, and improving upon the author's words, exclaimed, with much agitation, "Oh, by —, my sword *was* in his bosom!" Happily, it was attended with no serious consequence. This unfortunate actor, whose last performance is supposed to have been at Exeter, became, lat-

terly delirious, and died at the Lunatic Asylum at York, December 1785.

RICH, JOHN—This performer and manager was the son of a person who had been bred to the law, and was the first of the name and family that embarked in a theatrical government. He was manager of Drury-lane theatre; and though he had no conception of either authors or actors, yet his judgment was governed by a saving rule in both: he looked into his receipts for the value of a play; and from common fame he judged of his actors. He had been manager above forty years without a partner. He was a celebrated harlequin when young, under the feigned name of Lun, and gave the motley hero such expressive action, that words were unnecessary. It is no wonder, therefore, that he became attached to those exhibitions, and while manager, rendered pantomime (for which he had a true taste, and spirit for the necessary expences) the entertainment of a theatre-royal. Thus it was that he was able, with an indifferent company (sometimes the refuse of the other theatre), to leave a considerable fortune to his family.

He was manager of Lincoln's-inn Fields, which had been rebuilt by his father, after his expulsion from Drury-lane by Collier (see p. 91). In 1733 he removed his company to Covent-garden theatre.

Mr. Rich's education had been grossly neglected: for though his understanding was good, his language was vulgar and ungrammatical. From an habitual inattention, he had contracted a perverse custom of calling every body *miser*. This appellation having been, on some occasion, addressed to Foote, the latter grew warm, and asked

Rich the reason he did not call him by his name. "Don't be angry (said Rich), for I sometimes forget my own name."—"I know (replied Foote), you can't write your own name; but I wonder you should forget it."

He married Mrs. Priscilla Stevens in October 1744, and died in December 1761, aged 76; during the run of a grand spectacle which he got up in honour of his present Majesty's Coronation. His ill state of health (having been long afflicted with the stone), delayed the show for some time.

In private life he was highly respected: he had a long list of theatrical pensioners, and his benevolence was liberally exerted in his own neighbourhood at Uxbridge. Besides his widow, he left behind him four daughters, all married, among whom he divided his fortune equally.

Mrs. Rich was accustomed to say concerning the receipts of Covent-garden theatre, that if the treasurer's account consisted of three figures in the column of pounds, she was satisfied: of course, a hundred pounds was then thought a good receipt; but double the sum is now reckoned a bad one.

Rock, Mr.—Is a native of Ireland; but we cannot learn for what trade or profession he was intended. About fifteen years ago he came on the stage, and soon obtained an engagement at Covent-garden theatre, where he performed low Irish characters with some applause. He afterwards left London for several seasons, and played in the North of England, and Scotland, till Mr. Johnstone went to Drury-lane, when he was re-engaged at Covent-garden, to support some of Mr. Johnstone's characters.

He made his appearance in Dennis Brulgrud-dery, in John Bull, and sustained the humorous landlord with some share of ability. He assumed a few other parts in which Johnstone is so eminent ; but though he must sink into nothing by comparison, yet he obtained some well-merited applause. His chief excellence appears to be in vulgar Irish characters, such, for instance, as the low Hibernian in the musical farce of Rosina. Parts highly coloured with humour and sentiment, he cannot delineate with any excellence.

ROSS, DAVID—Was born in the year 1728 ; is said to have been a native of London, and was educated at Westminster School. He was disinherited by his father for going on the stage, yet had the happiness of retaining the steady regard of a most respectable number of school-fellows, as well as other friends, whom he acquired in later life. He made his first appearance at the theatre-royal Drury-lane in 1751, and having the advantage of a good person, and liberal education, was respectable in tragedy and comedy.

He uninterruptedly enjoyed this situation till about the year 1778, when being left out in the engagement of that time, he never afterwards recovered it. Improvident, like the generality of his brethren, he had made no provision for the future, and was consequently consigned to severe distress. In this situation, an ill-paid annuity from a mortgage on the Edinburgh theatre, (of which he had formerly been manager), served rather to tantalize than to relieve him. His wants, however, unavoidably disclosing themselves, he was one day surprized by an enclosure

of sixty pounds; the envelope containing only a mention that it came from an old school-fellow, and a direction to a banker where he was to receive the same sum annually. This was continued for many years, but the donor was still unknown. The mystery was at length discovered through the inadvertence of the banker's clerk, and Ross, with infinite gratitude, found his benefactor in the person of Admiral Barrington. The accident of breaking his leg in 1788, decided his theatrical fate, and he lived principally on the bounty of his great naval friend. His domestic life was marked by his marriage with the celebrated Fanny Murray, who, whatever her former indiscretions had been, conducted herself as a wife with exemplary prudence and discretion. Mr. Ross died Sept. 14, 1790, and was interred in the paved department of St. James's churchyard, in Piccadilly.

As an actor, it is said he had claims to great praise in tragic characters of mixed passions, as well as lovers in genteel comedy; but from indolence or pleasure, he was not always equal to himself. In the year 1752, during the Christmas holidays, he played George Barnwell, and Mrs. Pritchard personated Millwood. Soon after, Dr. Barrowby, physician to St. Bartholomew's hospital, was sent for by a young gentleman in Great St. Helen's, an apprentice to a merchant of eminence. He found him very ill with a slow fever, and a heavy hammer pulse, that no medicine could touch. The nurse told him that he sighed at times so deeply, that she was sure there was something on his mind. The Doctor sent every one out of the room, and told his patient, he was certain there was a secret

distress which lay so heavy on his spirits, that it would be in vain to order him medicine unless he would open his mind freely.

After much solicitation on the part of the Doctor, the youth confessed there was indeed something lay heavy at his heart, but that he would sooner die than divulge it, as it must be his ruin if it was known. The Doctor assured him, if he would make him his confidant, he would by every means in his power serve him; that the secret, if he desired it, should remain so to all the world, but to those who might be necessary to relieve him.

After much conversation, he told the Doctor he was the second son of a gentleman of good fortune in Hertfordshire; that he had made an improper acquaintance with the kept mistress of a Captain of an Indiaman, then abroad; that he was within a year of the expiration of his apprenticeship; that he had been entrusted with cash, drafts, and notes, with which he had made free, to the amount of 200l.; that going two or three nights before to Drury-lane theatre, to see Ross and Mrs. Pritchard in their characters of George Barnwell and Millwood, he was so forcibly struck, that he had not enjoyed a moment's peace since, and wished to die, to avoid the shame he saw hanging over him.

The Doctor asked where his father was. He replied, that he expected him there every minute, as he was sent for by his master upon his being taken ill. The Doctor desired the young gentleman to make himself perfectly easy, as he would undertake his father should make all right; and to get his patient in a promising way, assured him if his father made the least hesitation, he should have the money from *him*.

The father soon arrived : the Doctor took him into another room, and after explaining the whole cause of his son's illness, begged him to save the honour of his family, and the life of his son. The father, with tears in his eyes, gave him a thousand thanks ; said he would step to his banker, and bring the money. While the father was gone, Dr. Barrowby went to his patient, and told him every thing would be settled in a few minutes to his satisfaction.

On the return of his father, every thing was happily settled. The young man immediately recovered, and lived to be a very eminent merchant.

Dr. Barrowby never divulged his name, but the story he often mentioned in the green-room of Drury-lane theatre ; and after telling it one night when Mr. Ross was standing by, he said to him, " You have done some good in your profession, more perhaps, than many a clergyman who preached last Sunday ;" for the patient told him that the play had raised such horror and contrition in his soul, that he would, if it should please God to raise a friend to extricate him out of his distress, dedicate the rest of his life to religion and virtue.

Though Ross never knew his name, nor saw him to his knowledge, he received for nine or ten years at his benefit, a note sealed up with ten guineas, and these words : " A tribute of gratitude from one who was highly obliged, and saved from ruin, by seeing Mr. Ross's performance of Barnwell."

RUSSELL, Mr.—This performer is the son of an attorney, who resides in the neighbourhood of Drury-lane theatre. When a boy, Mr. Rus-

sell was employed at the Circus, St. George's-fields; since that period he has performed at several provincial theatres, particularly at Margate and Sheerness; at both which places he was acting manager, and assumed all the first characters in tragedy, comedy, and farce; and as the majority of a country audience estimates a man's abilities in proportion to the quantity and variety of his characters, not the *quality* and perfection of his delineation of them, Mr. Russell was considered clever, and obtained great applause. Through the interest of Mr. Grubb, he was engaged at Drury-lane theatre, and made his first appearance in the character of Charles Surface, in the *School for Scandal*; but though the good-nature of the audience prompted some slight degree of approbation, yet his performance had but very few claims to praise. The same evening he personated Fribble, in the farce of *Miss in her Teens*; and as a representative of this whimsical fop, he is entitled to praise.

He was absent from the theatre two or three seasons; but by Mr. Sheridan's request, he was re-engaged, and now sustains, on the indisposition of the principal performers, part of the pre-eminence in the drama. The figure of Mr. Russell is good, and though his features are by no means disagreeable as a private individual, they contain no expression, nor possess the necessary flexibility for the profession of a player. His voice is also particularly harsh and unpleasant; yet with these everlasting drawbacks to greatness as an actor, his figure, and delineation of fops, is (on a comparative view with Mr. R. Palmer's performance of beaux), much superior, and in every way more effective and pleasing to the public.

Mr. Russell married the daughter of Mr. Mate, a comedian much esteemed in the counties of Kent and Sussex, by whom he has had several fine children.

RYDER, THOMAS—Passed for a native of England, though he was supposed to be an Irishman; and it is said he was born at Nottingham, where his father, whose name was Darley, was a printer, to which business he had brought up his son; but who resigned the typographical for the mimic art; and having practised in the country, particularly at York, made his first appearance on the Irish stage in Captain Plume, in the Recruiting Officer, on December 7, 1757, then under the management of Mr. Sheridan; and was afterwards engaged by the succeeding manager, Mr. Brown, at a handsome salary, where he performed all the first comic parts with Mrs. Abington.

He commenced manager after the death of Mr. Mossop, in 1771; and both these gentlemen held the reins about the same length of time. Mossop became director in 1761, and Ryder finished his reign in 1782; and both experienced the vicissitudes attending Irish managements during their ten years' government. The latter was more successful in his onset, having derived considerable assistance from an unexpected prize in the lottery. This fortunate ticket was for several weeks lying neglected, till at last Mrs. Ryder meeting with it accidentally at her toilet, reminded her husband of it, who made inquiry, and to his surprize and satisfaction learnt the fortunate event.

The theatre in Fishamble-street was now opened in opposition to him, by Messrs. Van-

dèrmere, Waddy, &c. however, he got the better of a spirited contest, but chiefly owing to a manœuvre. The opera of the Duenna having been got up by his opponents at a great expence, soon after its representation in London, Ryder employed some confidential persons to take down the dialogue in short-hand, and being thus master of the words, advertised it under the title of *The Governess*, including the songs, &c. of the *Duenna*, which were published, with fresh names to all the dramatis personæ. The *Jew Isaac*, which he performed himself, was called *Enoch*. A prosecution was the result of this; but Ryder succeeded as defendant, it being the opinion of the Irish Judges, that any person may make memoranda, or write all, if capable, of whatever is publicly exhibited.

Notwithstanding these smiles of fortune, extravagance, which was, in a great measure, promoted by his wife, soon rendered him a distressed man. He kept his carriage, a splendid equipage, his country-house, &c. He began to build a most elegant town-house, on which he expended four thousand pounds, and which, having been afterwards sold unfinished, for about six hundred, very justly bore the name of *Ryder's Polly*. The business of printer, he for some time added to that of an actor, and set up a theatrical newspaper, which was published three times a week; he also printed some of the plays in which he performed himself, altering his characters, and adapting them to his own taste and humour.

Pecuniary embarrassments rendered him incapable of paying his performers their salaries, and this naturally occasioned green-room disturbances; and one night that the play was com-

manded by the Lord Lieutenant, on the appearance of his Excellency, and when the bell rung for the curtain to rise, Mr. Clinch, one of his players, came on the stage and informed the audience, that the company would no longer perform, as they had been for some time without receiving their money. His Excellency and suite accordingly departed ; when, to add to the insult, the play was then performed.

At this time Mr. Ryder was just recovered from a severe fit of illness, and still kept his room ; but on being acquainted with this singular event, he advertised, that ill as he still was, he would appear on the stage, and lay before the public the whole circumstances. The night was fixed for his benefit, and when he came forward, his pallid countenance so moved the audience, that they called to the prompter for a chair for him. Ryder then read several papers, for he could not, he said, trust to his memory ; when it appeared, that those who were the most clamorous had the least cause for complaint.

On this memorable night Mr. Daly, who afterwards opposed him as a manager, made his second appearance in that kingdom in the character of Lord Townley. The play did not begin till almost nine o'clock, and each performer, on his or her appearance, was received with either applause or disapprobation, according to the manager's report : among the former was Mr. Wilder, who met with shouts of applause, and who was ever remarked for being a favourite with every manager he served : among the latter was Miss Scrace, who was much hissed. Mr. Owenson wished to have replied to Mr. Ryder, but was not permitted. Mr. Vandermere, in consequence of this business, withdrew himself

from the theatre. The poor manager, however, still endeavoured to entertain the public.

At this time he rented both theatres, Smock-alley and Crow-street, in order to prevent any rivalry; the latter of which he kept open; but not being able to discharge some arrears of the former, he was persuaded to give it up; and soon found an opponent in Mr. Daly, against whom he exerted his best skill; and opened his opposition house, with Colman's applicable prelude of *The Manager in Distress*. Daly's motto was, "We can't command success, but we'll endeavour to deserve it." Ryder's, in answer to this was, "The less we deserve, the more merit in your bounty." However, his rival was too powerful; bankruptcy ensued, and he was at length obliged to become one of Daly's company; but with extraordinary privileges; particularly, that he was to play only *what* and *when* he pleased, and that he was to choose whatever character he liked in any new piece.

During Ryder's management, the following performers were engaged, at different times: Mr. and Mrs. Barry, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Foote, and Mr. Henderson (these had a share of the profits); Mrs. Abington (a hundred pounds for twelve nights); Miss Catley (forty pounds per night); Miss Pope, Mr. Dodd, Mr. Smith, Mr. J. Palmer, Mrs. Hartley, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Reddish, Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, Mr. Death, Mr. Wewitzer, Mr. and Mrs. O'Keefe, Mr. Dubellamy, Mr. Webster, Miss Wewitzer, Mr. Cauterley, &c.

In the season of 1787, Mr. Ryder made his first appearance at Covent-garden, in *Sir John Brute*, in the *Provoked Wife*. As he played the character in a different style to what it had

been generally represented, the critics were divided in their opinion; but in other characters they acknowledged his merit.

In low comedy he was excellent; and many of his best parts he never performed in London. He was the Roscius of Dublin, where he had been successively Richard the Third, Scrub, Captain Macheath, Shylock, Cardinal Wolsey, Scapin, &c. Though he never disgusted in any part, yet his tragedy, except some few characters, it is said, never gave much pleasure; but his low comedy was universally, and indeed justly admired. He died at Sandy Mount, Dublin, November 26, 1791.

A short time before his death, he brought his daughter out at the Hay-market, in Portia and Jessica, in the Merchant of Venice; Shylock by himself. His son, who had been an actor in Dublin, and afterwards entered into the army, was killed in a duel, in 1790.

SHARP, Mrs.—This excellent dancer, and pretty little woman was brought up to the stage from her infancy, and is well known to the public by her maiden name of Bella Menage. She was instructed in dancing by Mons. Didelot, and afterwards by Mr. D'Egville, who particularly accomplished her in the hornpipe.

To her excellent dancing in the pantomime of The Corsair, produced a few seasons back at the Hay-market house, that piece was greatly indebted for its popularity and success. Frequent as it was represented, she never missed her *encore*. In consequence of the desire of Mr. John Kemble, while manager of Drury-lane, she became an actress, and assumed several vocal characters with more than ordinary approbation:

she is also remembered to have represented children's parts when quite an infant. At that time it was remarked by a performer in the Green-room, whose merit was not above mediocrity, that children, when so wonderfully great at the beginning, seldom made good performers when they grew up; upon which little Menage very archly replied, "Then, Sir, I suppose *you* were wonderfully great when you were a child."

Her figure is small but elegant; and her features are regular and very pretty. In her public capacity she affords considerable pleasure to her audience, who universally reward her efforts with their approbation. As a private individual, her character is without blemish; in consequence of which she has access to most respectable circles in society. About three years ago, Miss Menage became the wife of Mr. W. Sharp, late pupil of Sir W. Beechey, and nephew to Mr. John Kemble. He has the honour to be portrait painter to the King, and obtained his Majesty's notice and patronage in the following whimsical manner.

During his apprenticeship with Sir William Beechey, he and his master were at Windsor Castle, painting for the King: young Sharp was left in the painting-room to prepare some colours, and while earnestly engaged in his business, he heard the repeated cry of Sharp! Sharp, Sharp! which is used as an abbreviation of the term "*Look sharp!*" and which imports this meaning to the domestics of the King's household, that the King is coming, and every one must be in his station to receive his Majesty, in the different apartments through which he usually passes to his own private chamber.

From the manner Sharp was called, he thought something unpleasant had happened to Sir William Beechey, and in the utmost confusion ran down stairs, where, on the turning of the stair-case, he stumbled over his Majesty and threw him down. The reader may easily conceive the mutual confusion that was felt on the occasion. When the King recovered himself, he asked poor trembling Sharp his name, and who he was? and then went on.

Some of his Majesty's attendants immediately began to lecture Sharp very severely, on being in the way when notice had been given that the King was coming. Sharp said, very innocently, that he was called in a great hurry, and had run down stairs under an impression that Sir W. Beechey had been taken suddenly ill." This occasioned the gentleman in waiting to ask the name of the young artist, who replied, that his name was *Sharp*. An immediate laugh followed the reply, and the King was instantly made acquainted with the particulars of the accident, who was so pleased with the joke, that his Majesty went into the painting-room and entered into a familiar conversation with Sharp, on the whimsical incident.

From this time young Sharp became the object of the King's notice, and his Majesty has ever since patronized him. The Queen, Princesses, and the King, have sat to him, and his portraits of this illustrious family are not only fine specimens of the art, but highly esteemed for being correct likenesses of our virtuous and beloved Monarch, her Majesty, and their beautiful daughters.

Mr. Sharp has not only distinguished himself as a portrait-painter; he has produced many

classical and historical pictures, and copied several pictures of this description for his Majesty, who has mentioned his labours in terms of flattering approbation. He lately painted a portrait of Farmer Jesty, the original inoculator of the cow-pox, for the members of the Vaccine Institution, who, in compliment to his excellent picture, presented him with a handsome piece of plate, bearing an appropriate inscription.

SHUTER, Mr.—This celebrated comedian is said to have been the son of a clergyman, and originally employed as a marker at a billiard-table; but discovering a turn for the stage, he was engaged at Covent-garden, where he soon became a performer of considerable merit, in low comedy, and a facetious companion; but through the levity of his disposition, was involved in numerous embarrassments.

In 1761, a paper war took place between him and Mrs. Clive, respecting their benefits, which happened both in opposition on the same night. This favourite of Thalia was so thoroughly acquainted with the *vis comica*, that he seldom called in those common auxiliaries, grimace and buffoonery, but rested entirely upon genuine humour. His chief excellence lay in old men. He had strong features, and was happy in a peculiar turn of face, which, without any natural deformity, he threw into many ridiculous shapes, by various alterations of the muscles of the cheeks, or rather of the mouth and nose. Nature did a great deal for this actor—education very little; but the goodness of his head was such, that he daily advanced towards perfection. His chief characters were Falstaff, Scrub, Master Stephen, Trapolin, Clincher, Launcelot,

&c. He revenged the treatment he met with in Churchill's poems, by getting merry with the author. He died November 1, 1776.

SIDDONS, Mrs — This accomplished woman, and theatrical phenomenon, is the eldest daughter of the late Roger Kemble, who, at her birth, was manager of an itinerant company of players. Very early in life she trod her father's stage as a singer, but soon quitted that line for tragedy. In the bloom of youth she conceived, and indulged a passion for Mr. Siddons, which not being countenanced by her parents, she quitted the stage, and engaged herself as lady's maid in the family of Mrs. Greathead, of Guy's-cliff, near Warwick, where she remained about a year; and then resolving to unite herself to the man of her affections, she was married to Mr Siddons, and soon after joined a strolling company of no great reputation.

In the course of a short time, she and her husband had the good fortune to be engaged by Mr. Younger to perform at Liverpool, Birmingham, &c. with whom she continued a few years, and acquired both profit and reputation; and in consequence of her increasing celebrity, she was engaged at Drury-lane, where she performed such characters as Mrs. Strickland, Mrs. Epicene, and the Queen in Richard the Third. Mrs. Siddons was at this time only considered as a second-rate actress; and being unfortunately assigned a part in an after-piece, written by the editor of a newspaper, which was damned the first night, the ungenerous author left no opportunity of injuring her reputation, and she quitted the London boards for a time, to return to them afterwards with increased lustre.

Our heroine immediately repaired to Bath,

where she was observed to improve rapidly, and is said to have been usefully assisted by the lessons of Mr. Pratt, then a bookseller in that city. There she attracted the notice of the audience, and had the good fortune to be patronized by the Duchess of Devonshire, who procured her another engagement at Drury-lane. Before she left Bath she wrote and spoke a farewell address, which she delivered with her usual excellence. She made her second appearance at Drury-lane on the 10th of October, 1782, in the character of Isabella, and astonished the house with such a display of powers, as they had seldom witnessed. Her fame was soon spread abroad, and the theatre overflowed every night; the taste for tragedy returned; and the manager, whose Critic seems to have been expressly written to drive Melpomene from the stage, received "golden favours" from her votaries. Far from proving ungrateful, he generously gave Mrs. Siddons an extra-benefit, and increased her salary. Her success was the means of introducing her sister, Miss F. Kenble, on the same stage; and she performed Jane Shore, while her near relative played Alicia, on her first appearance. The latter, however, not altogether fulfilling the expectations of the public, honourably withdrew, in consequence of a marriage with Mr. Twiss, a literary gentleman, and a well known traveller.

Mrs. Siddons's *extra-benefit* was given her before Christmas; she then appeared in Belvidera, and gained fresh laurels, and an enormous receipt. The two counsellors Pigot and Fielding, were so highly delighted, that they collected a subscription among the gentlemen of the bar, of one hundred guineas, and presented them to

her, accompanied with a polite letter, as a token of their esteem. This was an honour which we believe, has not been conferred on any actor or actress since the time when Booth gave such general satisfaction in the character of Cato.

In the summer, this great and amiable actress went to Dublin, the inhabitants of which were equally astonished at her powers. On her return for the winter (1783-4), she performed, for the first time, "By Command of Their Majesties." During the succeeding summer, she took a second trip to Ireland, and also visited Edinburgh; in both of which places, she not only received great salaries, but very considerable presents from unknown hands, particularly a silver urn, which was sent after her to London, on which was engraved these words: "*A reward to merit.*"

Envy and malice, as usual, pursued merit; and to these alone we can attribute the attack made on her in a newspaper, respecting her treatment of an unhappy sister, &c. These reports had, however, such an effect on the town, that on her first appearance on the stage in 1784, she was saluted with the cry of "*off, off!*" Her friends at length obtained her a hearing; and her husband and brother, by means of uncommon exertions, succeeded in refuting the calumnies to which she had been exposed. She was accordingly restored to public favour. Although she had conducted herself during this contest with great composure, yet it made such an impression on her mind, that she determined to retire to Wales with the few thousands she had then saved: but the persuasions of her friends, and a consideration of the welfare of her family, made her alter this resolution.

Their Majesties about this time paid her much attention. Her talent in reciting dramatic works had been highly spoken of, which reaching the ears of the Royal Family, she was frequently invited to Buckingham-house and Windsor, where she and her brother often recited plays.

As some relaxation on account of her health had now become necessary, she quitted Drury-lane for a time, and performed at Weymouth, Plymouth, Liverpool, &c. under the most honourable and flattering patronage, which with her increasing reputation, rendered her journey very profitable.

On her return to town, she entered into a new engagement with the proprietors of Drury-lane, who paid her a certain sum for each night's performance, by which means she avoided injuring her health by the constant repetition of theatrical exertions.

Since her brother, Mr. John Kemble, became a proprietor of Covent-garden theatre, her services have been given to the interest of that property, and considering the declining state of the Tragic Muse, Mrs. Siddons has displayed her wonderful talents with great pecuniary advantage to the theatre.

This lady, who adorns the mimic hemisphere with such distinguished splendour, is now near sixty years of age; and though she has laboured under several severe fits of indisposition, she still retains every vigour of intellect and person, with all that majestic beauty which is the peculiar character of her countenance. Like her brother, she inherits a dignified person, with a cast of features happily formed to delineate all the great passions of the soul.

Nature has exhausted her perfections in the formation of Mrs. Siddons' sublime countenance, and has united in it all the lineaments of an exalted mind. In the arts, ancient or modern, neither the chisel nor pencil have produced a face that contains half that portion of expression and grandeur, which sits on the majestic brow of this admirable woman. Her eyes are large and dark, and have correspondent consequence with the other parts of her features, and which give all the emotions of the heart with astonishing intelligence. Her voice is physically rich, powerful, and melodious: it is also under the direction of a fine ear, and a cultivated judgment, and when employed in the high walks of Melpomene, it reaches the heart with the most powerful effect.

She possesses the whole art of speaking; and it is said, unites all the great qualities of Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Crawford; but we know, she has personal and mental advantages which must always shade their memory, on comparing the living with the dead.

It would be an act of injustice to the talents of Mrs. Siddons, to close this article without taking a view of some of those many beauties which accompany her descriptive powers in a few of her principal characters.

The different plays in which this lady shines in all the radiance of theatrical lustre, are too well known to need any comment on either their construction or diction: we shall therefore confine our remarks wholly to her performance in them.—As the representative of the injured Isabella, Mrs. Siddons claims our unqualified eulogium, for her natural, delicate, and finished illustration of the text. The interest she

creates when she enters absorbed in her own miseries, yet with a modest dignity of deportment rejects Villeroy with so mild a forbearance of his suit, and such a grateful recollection of his friendship, as renders her refusal meritorious even to him; while affection is pictured in her face for her child, in delivering these words:

“ My little angel! no, you must not cry;
Sorrow will overtake thy steps too soon;
I should not hasten:”

strongly evinced that even misery, with that pledge of her Biron's love, was dearer to her than affluence with Villeroy.

In her piteous appeal to the feelings of her cruel father, her tones are the most soft and affecting that can possibly reach the heart; but when the unfeeling Count, resisting her pathetic entreaty for her child, “to save him from the wrongs that fall upon the poor,” and would force the boy from her, she bursts forth with all that sublime pathos which characterize her talents—

“ No, we must never part!—’tis the last hold
Of comfort I have left; and when he fails,
All goes along with him—
I live but in my child!”

And on finding him inexorable, she colours the following words in a style beyond our just description:

“ Then Heaven have mercy on me!”

The submissive plaintiveness of her tone, must ever be remembered with affecting delight and admiration. In the second act she beautifully delineates despair, governed by piety:

“ Do I deserve to be this outcast wretch,
Abandon'd thus, and lost?—But 'tis my lot;
The will of Heaven, and I must not complain.”

Passing over other little beauties which she gives to the character, we now come to her reluctance to part with Biron's ring. The manner of her kissing it, and the suddenness of the motion with which she gives it to the nurse, shews a fear of trusting herself with another look at the gift of love, lest another glance at it should recall the remembrance of the act to which her bitter misery had power to lead her.

She is particularly great also where she meets her creditors; the conflicting passions which appear to agitate her mind in this scene, constitute acting that we despair of ever seeing adorn our stage, when Mrs. Siddons shall be no more.

This beauty is followed by a thousand others, that we feel at a loss to describe with accuracy. But when she is interrupted in her contemplation by the advice of Carlos, to give him, by accepting Villeroy's hand, “ a friend and father;” the violence and surprize with which she exclaims, “ a husband!” is so expressive of her horror at the idea, that every auditor instantly becomes pervaded with a correspondent sympathy.

The unwillingness with which she consents to become the wife of Villeroy, while fondly kissing her darling child, as if to conceal her want of affection for him, and to avoid giving pain to his generous and friendly nature, is exquisitely delineated.

At the nuptial feast she displays infinite judgment in her deportment, and forces a smile on the cheek that is pallid with grief.

In the fourth act, when she embraces Biron's

ring with agitating fears, is as interesting a piece of acting as ever adorned the stage; and her dread to behold him, and the fearful scrutiny with which she examines the features of the disguised Biron, together with the horrid satisfaction visible in her countenance for his supposed death, are, in point of excellence, beyond any thing we can justly describe. When he throws off his disguise, and she discovers that he is the long-lost partner of her heart, is also a sublimity of scenic exertion which has a most powerful hold of the feelings. Through the whole of this interesting scene, she is astonishingly great. Her forgetfulness of her own situation in the pleasure of seeing her husband once more, and the manner in which she busies herself in all the little offices about him, is so so natural and affecting, that it draws forth the most unqualified applause.

Her endearing voice and look in giving these words, "I'll but say my prayers and follow you"—which is followed by a distraction, which that idea inspires—

"My prayers! no, I must never pray again!
Prayers have their blessings to reward our hopes;
But I have nothing left to hope for more;"

and the desperate means she fixes on to rid herself of

"All the reproaches, infamies, and scorn,
That every tongue and finger will find for her;"

are painfully affecting. Again, her reluctance to disclose her misery, yet the dark hints she gives of it, constitutes a most sublime picture of love. Her start, on approaching to stab Biron; her shock when going to take a last farewell of him, and the insanity which immediately follows,

affects the spectator's mind with the most sympathetic horror. A thousand beauties are imparted to the eye and ear of her audience, which work upon the feelings with all their due effect. We cannot leave unnoticed the sublime and distracting solemnity in her voice, when the wounded Biron is led in; her dying laugh, and her maternal embraces of her child. When Mrs Siddons dies, Isabella will be lost for ever to the stage.

In that wide range of tragic characters, which for years have been supported by this lady, there appears the same excellence in the representation of all of them.

Her personification of Lady Macbeth, is pregnant with beauties: the eye and ear are continually delighted with the elegance of her attitudes, the expression of her features, and her rich and all powerful voice.

In Zara, Belvidera, Margaret of Anjou, Jane Shore, and Lady Randolph, she cannot be seen but with the most exalted delight. There are also a variety of other characters which have been rendered conspicuous by her support of them, and on which she has shed an effulgence that will diminish in lustre when her professional powers shall be withdrawn from the mimic world. Her acting is not made up of noise and rant, with a wild and injudicious display of action. It is not the common thing of the day. She knew that Nature, left to itself, would do but little; that deep affliction, and a variety of accomplishments, were necessary steps to the temple of Fame; and with these philosophic impressions, Mrs. Siddons has become mistress of every art that is at all related to the drama, or that can adorn the gentlewoman: these must

be numerous, as an actress has to assume all the habits and passions attached to the human character. Among the most useful accomplishments of a player, a knowledge of the antique figure and painting are absolutely necessary, as they furnish a performer with a classical and perfect possession of the most beautiful attitudes; and Mrs. Siddons has not been insensible to the value of these acquirements, and has united with a theoretical knowledge of the arts, the practical art of sculpture, in which she has, on several occasions, greatly distinguished herself. This accounts for her action being so chaste, expressive and captivating. The most critical eye might look in vain for an inelegant attitude, or a sudden break in her action, or the figure thrown out of its proper position by too great an extension of the arms in either direction.

Her attitudes, features, and sentiments, so accurately unite in their respective application, that the most trifling word goes to the audience with more effect than what the generality of players will produce by a mouth's rant. On her features we cannot refrain making a few more remarks. The consummate skill with which she employs the muscles of her face in the just illustration of every passion, is great beyond example. Though Nature has been bountiful in giving her an expressive face, yet such a gift in the possession of a careless and uneducated actress, would not do much. She is such a perfect mistress of her countenance, that she can impart the progressive rays of a passion to the very achme of excellence. Her brow emits all the various tints of the passion which characterize the portrait she assumes. Her eyes have such a playful sublimity about them, that with a glance a spectator may possess her

thoughts before she has opened her lips. With her the sun of Melpomene will set.

In private, Mrs. Siddons is said to possess all the qualities which constitute the accomplished gentlewoman, and the amiable and intelligent companion.

SIDDONS, HENRY—This gentleman is the son of the above. He was born at Wolverhampton, in Staffordshire, October 23, 1774, and appeared for the first time as the Child in *Isabella*: he was one of the three reasons Mrs. Siddons gave in an Address written by herself, for leaving a place where her talents had met with general approbation.

As part of this poetical Address is applicable to her children, it may not be amiss to present it to our readers; we therefore beg leave to subjoin the effusion of her muse—

“But to my promise: If I thus am bless’d—
In friendship link’d—beyond my worth caress’d;
Since I’m secure in my employer’s aid,
Who meets my wishes ere they scarce are made;
Why do you quit (you’ll say) such certain gain,
To trust caprice, and its vexatious train?
What can compensate for the risks you run?
And what your reasons?—surely you have none.
To argue here would be your time’s abuse,
My word I keep—my reasons I produce.

[*Here were discovered her three children.*]

There are the moles that heave me from your side,
Where I was rooted—where I could have dy’d.
Stand forth ye elves and plead your mother’s cause,
Ye little magnets—whose strong influence draws
Me from a point, where ev’ry gentle breeze
Wafted my bark to happiness and ease;
Sends me advent’rous on a larger main,
In hopes that you may profit by my gain.”

The first night Mrs. Siddons appeared on the Drury-lane boards, in the character of *Isabella*, in the *Fatal Marriage*, her son Henry personated the Child in the same play. He was shortly

after sent to Doctor Barrow's Academy, in Soho-square, where he continued a few months, and then went to the Charter-house, by the nomination of the Queen: at this seminary, (which may be ranked among the first in this country), he remained five years, and acquired a competent knowledge of the Classics.

The passion he had cherished for the profession of his relatives, was obvious at an early period of his life.—His leisure time was always employed in the perusal of dramatic poets; at the age of fifteen he wrote an interlude, called *Modern Breakfast*, which was acted for his aunt, Mrs. S. Kemble's benefit; it was introduced by an elegant prologue by Mr. J. Taylor, to whom most of our dramatic writers are indebted for assistance in various ways. This piece was favourably received by the audience. He afterwards published three novels, viz. *William Wallace*, *Leon*, a Spartan story; *Somerset*; and a few seasons back he produced an after-piece, for the benefit of the late Mr. Middleton, entitled *The Sicilian Romance*; all of which have been considered as highly creditable to the invention and literary talents of their author. After leaving school his father took him to France, for the advantage of learning the language, and other requisites necessary to accomplish him for the stage. But these advantages he was in a great measure deprived of by the violent tumults which then convulsed that country. On his return, he almost immediately joined his uncle, Mr. Stephen Kemble's company, in Sheffield; and in the 18th year of his age, he made his appearance, Nov. 1792, in the character of *Zanga*, in the *Revenge*. Notwithstanding the part was arduous for an inexperienced actor, he acquitted

himself with considerable credit.—Our hero then accompanied Mr. Stephen Kemble to Newcastle and Edinburgh, where he performed several seasons with the nightly encouragement of the Caledonians. The Stranger and Rolla brought him more into notice in the Northern circuit, than all his previous exertions. The talent he displayed in the above parts, induced his mother to recommend him to Mr. Harris, who immediately engaged Mr. Siddons for three years. In October 1802, he appeared in a comedy called Integrity, which he sustained with great ability, and the audience marked his efforts with the warmest eulogium and applause. The same season he performed Hamlet, Othello, Edgar, Egerton, Hotspur, Alonzo in the Revenge, and some other material characters—all of which have proved his possession of great requisites for the profession. But this gentleman has what very often accompanies men of real talent, a fine contexture of nerve, which often renders the execution of the best intellectual designs abortive; at least disables the artist from communicating that warmth, energy, and beauty, with which the subject has inspired his soul; but which he feels a difficulty to impart. It was this delicacy of feeling which rendered Mr. Siddons's descriptive powers not so interesting to an audience, as at first they would have been, had he possessed less talent and more confidence; the latter qualification is known to do more in almost every department of life, than modest merit. Since, however, he has been at Drury-lane, he has exhibited many traits of improvement, and supported several characters with considerable ability, which will warrant us in predicting, that his talents will gain him, in

the course of a few seasons, a very honourable situation in the theatre, and great estimation with the public.

In June, 1802, Mr. Siddons took for his partner the beautiful and accomplished Miss Murray, whose requisite merits as an actress are held in high estimation, and whose private character is an honourable example of many good qualities to the sex.

SIMMONS, Mr.—This excellent little comedian has been on the stage from his infancy; and has proved himself a great acquisition to Covent-garden theatre, where he personates whimsical servants, and a variety of other characters, with very great original ability. Parts of considerable consequence have frequently been sustained by him, on the indisposition of other performers, with every satisfaction to the audience, who always receive him with a hearty welcome.

SMITH, Mr.—This celebrated actor, and much-esteemed gentleman, is the son of a grocer or tea-dealer in the city of London. He was born about the year 1730 or 1731; and after an education at Eton, was sent to St. John's College, Cambridge, probably with a view to the church. At the university his conduct was marked with some eccentricities, which, though deserving censure from the superintendants of education, not unfrequently accompany good talents and laudable dispositions. A little extravagance deranged his finances, and an unlucky elevation, occasioned by liquor, brought him into a situation which required concessions too humiliating for the confidence of youth to submit to: he abandoned

his prospects of college advancement, and threw himself on the public for support and subsistence. The cause of his disgrace at the university is said to have arisen from his joining with other young men in an evening frolic: when, being pursued by the Proctor, he snapped an unloaded pistol at him. For this offence he was doomed to a punishment, which he resisted, and to avoid expulsion, left the college, and came to London, where he engaged himself with Mr. Rich, then manager of Covent-garden theatre.

At this period Mr. Barry and Mrs. Cibber were the principal performers at that house; and from the former, Mr. Smith seems to have received the rudiments of his new profession. His first appearance on the stage was January 1, 1753, in the character of Theodosius, in the *Force of Love*. He continued twenty-two years at Covent-garden, with increasing reputation; and in the winter of 1774, engaged with Mr. Garrick, and remained at Drury-lane during the rest of his theatrical life, which expired in the season of 1788; when having married a woman of fortune, he took leave of the public in the character of Charles, in the *School for Scandal*, to the great regret of all the admirers of the drama; but in which character he appeared again May 16, 1798, for Mr. King's benefit, owing, it is said, to a wager, which he resolved should benefit his friend. Notwithstanding the disadvantages of age and corpulency, and more especially a long absence from the stage, he then performed with an ease and elegance that obtained the unanimous plaudits of a crowded audience. During the course of thirty-five years Mr. Smith never was absent from London one season, nor ever performed out of the metropolis, except the sum-

mer immediately after Mr. Holland's death, at Bristol, whose share in that theatre he held for a season; and again in 1774, he went in the summer to Dublin. His representation of Kiteley, in *Every Man in his Humour*, was deemed superior to Garrick's, and it must be confessed, that in the *School for Scandal*, he was Charles "the genteel, the airy, and the smart;" yet the last night of his performing it he was inferior to himself, no doubt for the want of practice. He came to London to see Master Betty perform, and is one of his great admirers. (See Master Betty.)

SMITH, Miss—Is said to be the daughter of a tailor, of Princes-street, Drury-lane, at whose death her mother married her present husband, and became an actress, and with him has played in various parts of England and the united kingdoms.

From an infant Miss Smith has been employed in the capacity of an actress, playing characters according with her age. As she approached adult life, she appeared before the public on the Liverpool stage, where she personified parts suitable to her situation in the company. She afterwards performed under the management of Mr. Macready, at Birmingham, and exercised her juvenile powers with flattering encouragement. From this company Miss Smith went to Bath, at which place she became a favourite in a rather wide range of characters. Mr. Harris, who wished to afford the public all the novelty in his power, and who is in general very liberal in his remuneration of talents, engaged Miss Smith at a very handsome salary. She accordingly made her *debut* before a London audience on

Oct. 2, 1805, in the character of Lady Townley, in the Provoked Husband; and appeared to receive the general approbation of the house. After the play, she delivered Collins's Ode on the Passions:—With respect to her recitation of it, critical justice obliges us to say, that her effort was not beyond mediocrity; but there was some novelty in her manner of reciting this poem. It was converted into a kind of *melo-mono-drame*. The verses that describe each passion were first spoken, and then the passion attempted to be exhibited in action, which was accompanied by corresponding music. As far as the novelty of the performance is to be considered, it was pleasing, and afforded satisfaction to her auditory: but if we separate the accompanied action from the delivery of the poem and music, we cannot bestow on it great eulogium; as her attitudes were not expressive, and did not identify the passion of the poem with any force of colouring.

Since that period Miss Smith has assumed a variety of characters, among which was Rosalind; but we do not think that her powers are at all calculated for comedy. In the serious cast of the drama, this lady is often extremely happy in the support of her author, and we have occasionally seen her personate Desdemona, and some few principal characters, with much pleasure. Her figure is small, and does not display any importance. Her features are a miniature likeness of Mrs. Siddons, but not very flexible; her eyes are bright, but under no system of professional use: a studious attention to this necessary art is, however, within her power, as her face contains expression. Her voice is powerful and sweet, and her style of acting is evidently of

the Siddonian school. Some of her friends have considered her superior to Mrs. Siddons: if such praise was intended to serve her, we lament that they could have been so injudicious in their method of bestowing eulogy.

Without wishing to detract from the improving talents of Miss Smith, we should feel happy if the stage could rear an actress with the merits of Mrs. Siddons; there would then be some hopes, that the dignity of Melpomene might continue to grace the English theatre, when that lady shall have left nothing but her immortal name for the admiration of succeeding ages.

SPARKS, Mrs.—This lady passed many years of her theatrical career in various provincial companies in the North of England and Scotland. She made her first appearance at Drury-lane theatre in 1798, in the *Old Maid*, in Mr. Murphy's farce of that name. Her performance evinced talents of no ordinary rank, which, however, were not called into frequent use, till the secession of Mrs. Walcott. Since that event she has sustained a regular cast of character, with great satisfaction to the public; among them we have noticed her in the following:—Alice, in the *Castle Spelldre*; Lady Brumback, in the farce *Of Age To-morrow*; Mrs. Heidelberg, in the *Claudette Marriage*; &c. &c. She is sister to Mrs. Brown, who came out at Covent-garden house in 1785, in the part of Miss Prue, in *Love for Love*; and who acquired some fame by her spirited acting in the comedy of *The Rump*. Her husband is also on the stage, and made his *debut* before a London

audience, in Gibby, in *The Wonder*, soon after the introduction of his wife.

STANWELL, Mrs.—This pretty woman is a native of Berkshire, and the daughter of a respectable farmer in that county. Early in life she was married to a gentleman of good property, by whom she has two children. After a separation from her husband she became enamoured of the stage, and was accordingly introduced, by a very respectable connexion, to Mr. John Bannister; who, after having given her the most friendly instructions in the art and mystery of acting, brought her out on the Haymarket boards, in the character of *Rosalind*, in the season of 1804; and her exertions were entitled to the approbation she received. She immediately obtained an engagement, and assumed a variety of parts of a minor description, with very pleasing effect.

Mrs. Stanwell has a very fine formed person, with handsome features, and beautiful eyes; and when she can get the better of her fears, which very much lessen the effect of her performance, she will, no doubt, be found a very useful and interesting actress to a London theatre. Report says, that she is at present in the Cheltenham company.

STORACE, Signora—This excellent singer and actress was sister to the late Stephen Storace, whose compositions have immortalized his name in the musical world. At a very early age she accompanied her brother to several parts of Italy, and received the instruction of the famous Sacchini, under whom she made great progress

as a singer and musician. Madame Storace first presented herself to public notice, in a serious opera at the theatre at Florence, when she very soon became the object of general approbation. She then went to Vienna, where her fame and admirers greatly increased, and where she became the object of Dr. Fisher's affection: they united in the bonds of holy matrimony; but were soon separated by an order from the Imperial Joseph, and the Doctor left Vienna for Ireland, where he supported himself by teaching, and playing at concerts.

She then resumed her maiden name, and returned to England, where she appeared in Italian Operas, and was a leading singer at the most fashionable concerts.

In 1782 Madame Storace made her first appearance at Drury-lane, in the character of Adela, in the opera of the Haunted Tower, in which she displayed an excellent voice, great taste, and astonishing powers of humour.

In 1793 she gave her services to Mr. Colman's theatre, where she obtained a great share of public favour. On the death of her brother, she left Drury-lane theatre, in consequence of a difference with the proprietors, and accompanied Mr. Braham to the Continent. (See Braham.)

Independent of her vocal powers and knowledge of music, she is an excellent comic performer, and stands unrivalled in the little operas of *My Grandmother*, and *No Song No Supper*. In these she often enraptures her audience with rich effusions of humour and harmony.

SUETT, Mr.—This comedian was a native of Chelsea, and born in the year 1755. In the tenth

year of his age he became one of the choir of Westminster Abbey, then under the management of Doctor Cooke, from whom our hero received his musical education, as well as the advantage of classic acquirement, which is always given to the singing boys of the Foundation. After four years valuable instruction at this royal seminary, he was introduced into public life at Ranelagh, and sung with Messrs. Bannister, Dibdin, Mrs. Baddeley, Mrs. Thompson, and several other eminent singers of that day. On the following season he was engaged at three public places of amusement—Foote's Theatre in the Hay-market, Mary-le-bonne Gardens, and Finch's Grotto Gardens, Southwark. At each of the above places of public resort he was particularly noticed for his vocal efforts, and received every inducement that could inspire him with enthusiasm for a public life. About this period he was invited by Tate Wilkinson, manager of the York theatre, to join his company for four months, on a very liberal salary: the offer was accepted by our hero, who soon found himself surrounded with every comfort his little heart could pant for. The strong testimony of public approbation which was nightly manifested to his juvenile efforts, induced him to abandon the idea of returning to London at the expiration of his engagement; and Suett's increase of popularity, with a rapid augmentation of income, rivetted him to the York company for nine years, where his talents procured him the highest salary that was then given to any of his mimic brethren. As a tribute of respect due to the dictates of a noble mind, we think it our duty to state the liberal and friendly conduct of Mr. Tate Wilkinson to the subject of these memoirs. In the summer of the year 1780, Mr. Suett en-

tered into an article with the above gentleman, to give him his services for the term of two years, any breach of which on either side would subject the defaulter to the penalty of one hundred pounds: a few days after the article had been signed, Mr. Suett received a letter from Mr. Linley, one of the patentees of Drury-lane theatre, offering him an advantageous engagement at the London house. The moment Mr. Wilkinson was acquainted with the purport of this letter, he committed the articles to the flames, though he was under the necessity of engaging two persons to perform Suett's cast of characters, and generously undertook to negotiate the business of our hero's London engagement—this was conduct seldom to be found within the walls of a country theatre.

In October of the same year he made his *entré* on the London boards in the part of Ralph, in the *Maid of the Mill*; the applause he got was earned by an ample display of the *vis comici*, which was put into action a few nights after in *Squire Richard*, in the *Provoked Husband*; his personification of this character also gained him considerable applause; during the remainder of the season he several times sustained first-rate characters with general approbation.

In the month of November 1781, Miles Peter Andrews brought out a comedy called *Dissipation*, which his Majesty was pleased to command, a few nights after it had passed the ordeal of public opinion. In this play that inimitable and never to be forgotten comedian, Parsons, sustained a prominent part; and on the evening anterior to his Majesty's visit, Mr. Parsons' sudden indisposition made a chasm in the comedy, which the manager could not get any one to fill at so short

a notice. On his majesty being informed of the circumstance, he particularly recommended Mr. Suett as the only gentleman in the theatre who could take the former comedian's character. An immediate application was made to our hero to accept the part, which he very readily took, and played without a rehearsal, to the utmost satisfaction of the house and the extreme pleasure of his Maj. sty. From that time he became the constant substitute for Mr. Parsons, whose precarious state of health rendered his professional duties very uncertain; and here we must be permitted to observe, that no man ever trod in the steps of Parsons, who did not suffer by comparison, particularly as his substitute was liable to be thrown into the shade by their alternate performance, which was owing to an asthmatic complaint that accompanied Mr. Parsons, which seldom kept him from his duty more than a week or two; therefore the public had the merits of two gentlemen constantly before them in the very same characters. But in justice to the memory of Suett, it is only fair to say, that whenever he had an original character to sustain, he never found a rival; in support of this assertion, we call the attention of our readers to his Dicky Gossip; Endless, in No Song No Supper; Lord Duberly, in the Heir at Law; Weasel, in the Wheel of Fortune; and a great variety of other characters, which had fallen to his care after the demise of Parsons, both at the Hay-market and Drury-lane.

Mr. Suett was a very accomplished musician, which rendered him valuable in opera, as he could blend harmony with humour; to add to the public feast, he had also acquired considerable celebrity as a composer; and we understand there are above one hundred pieces of his composition, of various

kinds now in circulation, which are held in high esteem by the public.

As a private individual Mr. Suett was much respected for his honour and integrity; but his society was little courted by the respectable part of the public, from his partiality to tipling with low company in public houses.—He has been succeeded at Drury-lane by Mr. Matthews, who is an indifferent substitute for him, and who lately performed *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, in which he made us regret the loss of Parsons, and smile at the feeble imitation he gave of the above great player.*

TAYLOR, Mr.—This favourite singer and performer was born at Bath, in the year 1777. His mother was a respectable inn-keeper, whose residence was known by the sign of the Cross-keys. At a very early period of his life he evinced a strong attachment to vocal and instrumental music, and frequently became a truant school-boy to enjoy a lesson of his favourite friend, Mr. Charles Incledon, who encouraged his youthful pursuits, and afterwards introduced him to Miss Guest, now Mrs. Miles, much celebrated for her taste on the piano-forte. Charmed with the promising talents of young Taylor, the above lady took him under her roof, as an apprentice for seven years, where he received a regular musical education, and occasionally sang at the annual Bath concerts with considerable credit to himself and to his mistress.

The changeable disposition of youth, however, soon began to shew itself; for the science which he had once embraced with delight, and pursued with rapture, soon became irksome, and bore the feature of too much sameness for the wavering

and warm fancy of a boy. In one of these fickle moments, when his mind was in search of new pleasures, he formed a resolution of trying his talents on the stage, and immediately set off for Southampton, where he sang two songs in character for one night only. After this little excursion he returned home, and for a short time continued his musical studies. At the age of sixteen, and under the auspices of Mr. Murray, now of Covent-garden theatre, he made his *entré* on the Bath stage, in the character of Captain Wilson, in the Flitch of Bacon; and acquitted himself with every satisfaction to the public. This, with the performance of *La Gloire*, in the Surrender of Calais; and several subsequent theatrical efforts, procured him an engagement at the *enormous salary* of *fifteen shillings* per week, till the death of Mr. Hutley, whose characters immediately came into his possession, with a considerable augmentation of his weekly income, which he retained with increased honours and reputation for several years, till Mr. Elliston (when appointed deputy-manager of the Hay-market theatre in 1803) recommended him to Mr. Colman, not only as an excellent singer, but a performer of great versatility of talents.

The part which ushered him to the notice of a London audience, was Lubin, in the opera of *The Quaker*; and it will be almost unnecessary to observe, that he deservedly met with a favourable reception. After passing through a regular routine of singing business at the Little Theatre, to the great satisfaction of Mr. Colman and the public, Mr. Harris engaged him as a member of the Covent-garden Corps, where he has been found particularly useful on the indisposition of Mr. Incedon, and other performers.

He is a very respectable actor, and can assume a variety of characters of an opposite description, with a very happy and satisfactory effect. His voice is sweet and powerful, and in both the serious and comic departments of the English opera it is heard with delight.

His wife performs at the Hay-market theatre, where she is a favourite with the public.

VANBRUGGEN, Mrs.—The wife of an actor of that name, who was unfortunately murdered as he was escorting the celebrated Mrs. Bracegirdle home from the theatre. She was before this marriage Mrs. Mountford, on whom the justly celebrated and well-known ballad of "Black-eyed Susan," was written by Mr. Gay. Lord Berkeley's partiality for this lady, induced him to leave her at his decease three hundred pounds a year, on condition that she never married. His lordship likewise purchased Cowley for her, which was afterwards the summer residence of Mr. Rich, and she besides received from him, at times, very considerable sums. After this she fell in love with Mr. Booth, but the desire of retaining her annuity prevented her being joined in the bands of wedlock with the lover whom she preferred to numbers that were candidates for her favour. This consideration obstructing, the union could not take place, and Mr. Booth soon found another mate. Mrs. Vanbruggen had contracted an intimacy with Miss Santlow, a lady celebrated as a dancer, and esteemed a tolerable actress. She was the declared favourite of Secretary Craggs, through whose liberality she became possessed of a fortune sufficient to enable her to live independent of the stage. What Mrs. Vanbruggen could not effect, Miss Santlow did. Mr. Booth

transferring his attention from the former to the latter, soon obtained possession both of her person and fortune. Our heroine no sooner heard of the perfidy of her lover, and the ingratitude of her friend, than she gave way to a desperation that deprived her of her senses. In this situation she was brought from Cowley to London, that the best advice might be procured for her. As during the most violent paroxysms of her disorder she was not outrageous, and now and then a ray of reason beamed through the cloud that over-shadowed her intellects, she was not placed under any rigorous confinement, but suffered to go about the house. One day, during a lucid interval, she asked her attendant what play was to be performed that evening, and was told that it was Hamlet. In this piece, while she had been on the stage, she had always met with great applause in the character of Ophelia. The recollection struck her: and with that cunning which is usually allied to insanity, she found means to elude the care of her servants, and got to the theatre, where concealing herself till the scene in which Ophelia was to make her appearance, in her insane state, she pushed on the stage before her rival, who played the character that night, and exhibited a far more perfect representation of madness than the utmost exertions of mimic art could do. She was *in truth* Ophelia herself, to the amazement of the performers as well as of the audience. Nature having made this last effort, her vital powers failed her. On her going off, she prophetically exclaimed, "it is all over!" and indeed that was soon the case, for, as she was conveyed home (to make use of the concluding lines of another sweet ballad of Gay's, wherein her fate is so truly described) "She,

like a lily drooping, then bowed her head, and died.'

WADDY, Mr.—Is a native of Ireland; where he was educated for the profession of an attorney, which for some time after his clerkship he followed. The society of actors, and the apparent pleasures of a stage life, induced him to quit his legal pursuits for Thespian honours, and he accordingly made his *debut* on the Dublin boards. In the course of time he became manager with Vandermere, of Fishamble-street theatre. The honours of management, it is said, he very soon resigned; and we afterwards hear of him as a member of the Norwich company, where his public exertions and private character were greatly esteemed. In 1798, he obtained a situation at Covent-garden theatre, and made a successful first appearance in the part of Connolly, in the comedy of the School for Wives.

On the secession of Mr. Quick, he succeeded to many of that gentleman's parts; for instance, Lord Duberly, in the Heir at Law; Vortex, in the Cure for the Heart-Ache, &c. He has also personated Sir George Thunder, in Wild Oats; and Downright, in Every Man in his Humour, with a happy and satisfactory effect. His Irish Landlord, in John Bull, is a much better piece of playing than Mr. Rock's performance of honest Dennis. In characters which assimilate to his bulk and personal appearance, he is no indifferent representative, and proves himself a very useful actor.

His daughter appeared in 1802, at Covent-garden theatre, in Julia Faulkner, in the Way to Get Married; and gave many proofs of pro-

missing talents. She is very young, and unites to a fine person an expressive countenance.

WARD, Mrs.—The maiden name of this lady was Hoare; (see Mrs. Powell of the Hay-market). She made her first appearance on the stage at Liverpool, where she married Mr. Ward, who was afterwards a favourite comedian in that company. Through the recommendation of Mr. Younger, the then manager of Liverpool, she and her husband were engaged at Drury-lane. Mr. Ward made his first appearance in *Ranger*, but was not so successful in London as his wife, who became a useful member of the theatre; he therefore resigned his situation at the end of the season; and some years after purchased a share in the Manchester theatre.

WATHEN, Capt.—This much-esteemed gentleman is the son of the late Dr. Wathen, and was brought up to the army. At the siege of Gibraltar he was raised to a lieutenant in the 89th regiment, and on the termination of the siege went with his regiment (the 14th) to Jamaica. At the close of the war he sold out with the brevet rank of major. During his military capacity he is said to have performed in some private plays, and on his return to England was a gentleman actor with the late Lord Barrymore, &c. His inclination for the stage still increasing, he became manager at Richmond, and accepted an engagement at Dublin from Mr. Daly, with whom he performed during a winter season (1793) under the assumed name of George.

During his management of the Richmond-theatre, Mr. Colman commenced a prosecution against him, for performing some of his *unpub-*

lished plays; but such are the ambiguities of the law, that what may be deemed self-property to-day, may be proved free game to-morrow. Thus the writings of O'Keefe were, by the long-robe, adjudged of no value. The *plaintiff* and *defendant*, however, were soon reconciled, and Mr. Wathen having given up his unprofitable theatre at Richmond, became a member of Mr. Colman's house; he was likewise engaged for the ensuing winter at Drury-lane, which situation he retained till the breaking out of the present war, when he resumed his military character.

Though as an actor he could not rank with Mr. J. Cannister, he however played some of his characters with considerable humour. His delineation of rustic servants, &c. appeared to entitle him to the greatest share of public commendation.

As a private gentleman and officer, Captain Wathen is an ornament to his country, and has more than once shewn himself worthy of her honours in the field of battle.

WEBB, Mrs.—Whose maiden name was Child, was born in Norwich, and first married to Mr. Day. She was an actress and singer in the Norwich company several years ago, and at Edinburgh, with her second husband, Mr. Webb. They both received an engagement at Covent-garden and the Hay-market, and Mrs. Webb soon *distinguished* herself in many corpulent and grotesque characters. Mr. Webb, returning home late one night, found in the street a deserted female infant, and calling a watchman to witness the poor babe's forlorn situation, inquired what could be done for her. The watchman observed,

as the night was so far advanced, she must be taken to the round-house, and the next day she could be sent to the workhouse. Mr. Webb, humanely considering that the cold and dampness of the round-house might be fatal to the child, resolved that his wife should be her nurse for that night, and like Don John in *The Chances*, carried home the infant, and told Mrs. Webb the adventure. The next morning, however, the child was refused admission into the workhouse, because she had found protection the preceding night, and had not the chance of perishing for want of proper care!—Thus charity is abused—thus humanity is requited! Mr. Webb having no children, consequently educated the little girl as his own, and she was ever after considered as his daughter. This worthy character, we are sorry to add, died in the King's Bench. Mrs. Webb introduced to the public, on her benefit at the Hay-market, 1788, her adopted daughter in the character of Leonora, in the *Padlock*, and appeared herself on the same occasion, at Covent-garden, in the character of Falstaff. She died November 24, 1793.

WELLS, Mrs. MARY—Maiden name Davies, was born in Birmingham, and having lost her father, who died in a mad-house, visited Dublin with her mother and sister, where she attempted the stage. She then played in different parts of the North, and was afterwards engaged by Mr. Miller, the manager of Shrewsbury. Here she married Mr. Wells, a performer in the company, who afterwards left her. The *forsaken* Mrs. Wells made her first appearance at the Hay-market about 1781. Her success was such as

to procure a winter engagement at Drury-lane. She played in tragedy, comedy, and opera. She then removed to Covent-garden theatre, and attempted imitations of the most celebrated actresses, which she delivered with great applause at the Royalty Theatre, 1786. She returned to the Hay-market for a few seasons, and afterwards employed her summers in the country. Her sister, Miss Davies, appeared for her benefit in the character of Amelia, in the English Merchant, July 28, 1786. In consequence of some pecuniary embarrassments, she was a prisoner in the Fleet, where she became acquainted with Mr. Sumbel, a foreigner, who had been a prisoner for contempt of court. She declared herself married to him, and in consequence became, or affected to become a Jewess: however, he contradicted the marriage, but she still retains his name. On her releasement, she advertised her imitations for the last week of Lent, which the Bishop of London prevented from taking place.

WESTON, THOMAS—This excellent comedian was the son of the chief cook in the royal kitchen. The emoluments of that place enabled his father to give his son a good education. About the age of sixteen he shewed a great partiality for theatrical exhibitions, at which he was frequently present. He also delighted in the company of actors, and associated with the young spouters of the day; of whose clubs he became a member. In these, his first appearance is said to have been in the tent scene in the tragedy of Richard III. and though his companions applauded his exertions, they privately observed, that his acting was execrable, and

his voice wholly unfit for the stage. He was hoarse almost immediately, but was, however, highly satisfied with his own performance, as he used afterwards jocularly to tell his friends.

His father procured him a place in the king's kitchen, called turnbroach: a sinecure of about thirty pounds a year, which he enjoyed till his death. By the same interest he was appointed an under-clerk of the kitchen, and accompanied George II. to Holland, when his Majesty visited Hanover.

After his return, unmindful of his father's advice, he is said to have too much indulged his passions, and to have spent his nights in riot, and his days in idleness. In consequence of this, and after frequent attempts to reclaim him, the navy was thought of as a probable means of reformation, and he was appointed a midshipman.

Pleased at first with his sword, cockade, and uniform, he showed himself among his acquaintance, and afterwards repaired on board his ship when commanded. Here his station and accommodations were by no means such as agreed with his habits, or gave him pleasure. He truly thought his genius cramped, and forced into a wrong direction. Among his friends was a clerk in the war-office, on whom he prevailed to write a letter, having the official seal, and directed to him on board the Warspite, which letter pretended to acquaint him that a commission in the army was preparing for him, and he was desired to return to London. By this artifice he obtained his purpose, and quitted the navy.

Tragedy continued to be the delight of Weston, nor could his friends convince him of his mistake. His stature was small, but Garrick, he said (per-

haps erroneously) was nearly an inch shorter than himself; and his voice he was convinced had sufficient power. In this persuasion he first became an actor in a company well known at that time, which visited every town and village within twenty miles of the metropolis. The former manager of this company, Oliver Carr, was then dead; but it still bore his name, and Weston enlisted under the widow.

The gains were so small, that they did not afford a subsistence; but here he had occasion to perform the part of Scrub, in the *Beaux Stragem*, by which he threw every one into raptures except himself. The dignity of tragedy still pervaded his thoughts. Mrs. Carr told him how entirely he had mistaken his powers, and that tragedy afforded him no hope. Weston gave an arch look, made no reply, but thought the more, and maintained his opinion, though the audience had been so struck with him, that the very boys followed him, exclaiming—*There! that's he that played Scrub!*

He quitted this company, and engaged in another, where he insisted on performing tragedy; and this he was allowed to do, in consequence of consenting to play comic parts.

The poverty of this company seemed to exceed the first, and Weston felt distresses which, however comic they might afterward appear, were severely felt at the moment. He and a companion were obliged to keep their room while their linen was washed; the landlady came, as usual for money to provide breakfast: they had but a sleeve of a shirt between them: the companion hid himself; Weston jumped into bed, slipped on the sleeve, and, stretching out the arm thus

covered, gave the money required. This anecdote he used afterward to tell of himself.

His first appearance in London was at a booth in Bartholomew-fair, kept by the famous comedians, Yates and Shuter, where he played nine times a day for a guinea! He afterward obtained an engagement under Foote; but his talents in London were still unknown, and when the *Minor* came out in 1760, the part allotted to him in that piece was Dick.

At this period he married, and the abilities of his young wife were so far promising, that she performed *Lucy* in the same comedy.

They were both afterward engaged at Norwich, at a good salary; but Weston returned with the season, to the Hay-market. His merits had not remained unnoticed by the piercing eye of Foote, and the part of *Jerry Sneak* was written expressly for him.

This performance at once stamped him a favourite, and he engaged with various companies, and played at Dublin, Chichester, Salisbury, and other places. With Ireland it appears he was not pleased, and promised never to return to that country; and with his wife also he so entirely disagreed, that they separated by mutual consent.

Having obtained an engagement at Drury-lane, though at a small and unworthy salary, he first performed *Abel Drugger* while Mr. Garrick was abroad, and was so highly applauded, that he at length obtained three pounds a week. His wants, or rather, alas, his habits of dissipation, increased with his salary; and the vicissitudes of this part of his life were such as are unworthy to be recorded of a man of such extraordinary

talents, which talents were at that time gradually rising into notice.

Foote and Garrick, but especially the former, well understood the worth of Weston, and frequently relieved him from the distresses into which, by the want of prudence, he was thrown. His temper was generous: when he had money he gave to all who asked, and he was seldom, if ever, without some idle worthless intruder, who encouraged his evil habits in order to subsist at his expence.

Being in the continual dread of bailiffs, he was frequently obliged to make the theatre his residence. When living in the Hay-market theatre, he was accustomed to shut the half door of the lobby, which had spikes at the top, and to bring a table and chairs, that he might take the air and smoke his pipe.

To this door a bailiff, whose face was unknown to Weston, and who carried clothes under his arm covered with green baize, as if he were a tailor, came and requested to speak with Mr. Foote. Weston unwarily opened the hatch, and the bailiff assumed his true character, and exhibited his writ.

Disguising his emotion, Weston desired the bailiff to follow him, that Mr. Foote might either pay the money or give security. The man did as he was desired, and the deceiver was deceived. He had not made a legal capture, by touching Weston; the passage behind the side boxes was very dark, the bailiff was obliged to grope slowly along; Weston knew the way, gained the door, which also had spikes, bolted it, crossed the stage, ran through the adjoining house of Mr. Foote, and escaped. This inci-

dent, while it shows his folly, proves his presence of mind.

At the period that his fame was increasing, he went to Edinburgh, where he was considered by the people as the best comedian they had ever seen; and the greatness of his benefit proved the respect in which his abilities were held.

After this, we find his salary at Drury-lane was increased to five pounds a week! a sum, even in those times, totally inadequate to the merit of this unique performer. It was the consequence of the distress which his dissipation produced.

It happened, on a day when his name was in the play-bills, that he was arrested for a small sum, for which he requested these generous managers would provide, and which request they very cautiously refused. Being known to the bailiff, Weston prevailed on him and his follower to go with him to the play, and he there placed himself and them in the front of the two shilling gallery.

Before the curtain drew up, an apology was made, stating that Mr. Weston, being ill, could not possibly attend; and it was therefore hoped that another performer might supply his place. Weston rose, as he intended, and declared, aloud, the apology was entirely false: he was there, well, and ready to do his business, but that he was in custody for a small debt, for which, though entreated, the managers had refused to give security. Weston had well foreseen the consequences: the managers were obliged to set him free.

A performer of less abilities would immediately have been expelled the theatre; but for Weston no substitute could be found. After this, his residence was again confined to the theatre.

His palate was sickly, his digestion bad, his appetite demanded to be pampered, and habitual indulgence must be daintily fed : to satisfy this, though he could not eat a bird so large as a lark, he would send for a turkey. The first fruits of the season, asparagus, pease, peaches, green geese, whatever he fancied, must be procured.

The scurvy, a disorder that he had long nurtured, now encrusted his face, where it appeared with virulence, while it also fell with excess into his legs. For a time, he consented to abstain from liquor, and use medicines ; his face began to be smooth, his appearance to be more healthy, and his legs to heal. But, rendered impatient by confinement, he gave a loose to his inclinations, and by a debauch had nearly died.

His fame being now at its height, his benefits were good, a part of his debts were paid, and he obtained the power to hire a house and garden, near Battersea-bridge, where it was his intention to regulate his affairs and live a life of sobriety ; but for this undertaking he had not sufficient resolution.

So strong was the habit of drinking spirits in him, that he could not forbear even in the time of performance. The servants of the theatre were forbidden to provide him with liquor, he therefore generally brought it himself.

Coming to the house too late one evening, Mr. Foote met him at the stage door ; and, after expressing chagrin, that the audience should be kept waiting, Foote asked what he had under his coat ? Ashamed of the vice in which he indulged, Weston replied, a bottle of Seltzer water, which he was ordered to drink. Suspecting the truth, Foote insisted that he should taste ; and finding it to be spirits, broke the bottle. Weston's feel-

ings however were so roused, and offended, that neither friendly advice nor entreaty could induce him to dress for his part, till the bottle was replaced.

Driven from Chelsea by his creditors, and again confined to the precincts of the theatre, his health was visibly fast on the decline. Of this he was often reminded, and as often replied either with a joke, or an utter contempt of death. During the last season, he played but seldom, nor ever appeared in high spirits, though his mind was not disturbed.

He glimmered awhile, like an expiring taper, till the 18th January, 1776, when he died, universally lamented as an actor, and, by his acquaintance, regretted as a man. Generous and kind, he would willingly share the last shilling with a friend. Too sensible of his worth to exhibit himself, except before the public, he was not entertaining in a large company, though gay and social with a chosen few. His habits induced him to seek associates beneath himself, for so rooted were these habits, that they must be indulged. He was in debt, not from the want of principle, but of economy; his little revenues were squandered, not properly expended. Our authority says he was buried in the vault of his kindred, but does not mention where that vault may be found.

The parts in which Weston excited such uncommon emotion were those of low humour. He was the most irresistible in those of perfect simplicity: his peculiar talent was the pure personification of nature. It is said it was impossible for an actor to be less conscious than Weston appeared to be, that he was acting. While the audience was convulsed with laughter, he was per-

fectly unmoved : no look, no motion of the body, no absence of mind, ever gave the least intimation that he knew himself to be Thomas Weston. Never for a moment was he present : it was always either Jerry Sneak, Doctor Last, Abel Drugger, Scrub, Sharp, Torrington, or distinctly and individually the character he stood there to perform ; and it was performed with such a consistent and peculiar humour, it was so entirely distinct from what is commonly *called* acting, and so perfect a resemblance of the man whom the pencil of the poet had painted, that not only was the laughter excessive, nay, sometimes almost painful, but the most critical mind was entirely satisfied. Weston had an extraordinary talent of self-recollection. On ordinary occasions his presence of mind seldom forsook him ; as the anecdotes related of him prove.

Shuter had long been the favourite of the galleries ; and Weston, before his comic fame was established, appeared, as a substitute to Shuter, in the part of Sharp. Shuter's name was in the play-bills, and, when Weston appeared, the galleries vociferated "Shuter ! Shuter !" Mrs. Clive played the part of Kitty Pry, and was no less a favourite than the other. The uproar continued, and nothing could be heard but "Shuter ! Shuter !" As soon as it was possible to be heard, Weston, in his own inimitable and humorous manner, asked aloud, in a seemingly stupid amazement, and pointing to Mrs. Clive—"Shoot her ! Shoot her ! Why should I shoot her ? I am sure she plays her part very well !" The apparent earnestness and simplicity with which he appeared to ask this question were so inimitable, and it so truly applied to the excellent acting of Mrs. Clive, that the burst of laughter was uni-

versal, and the applause which Weston deserved attended him through the part.

On another occasion, when, by frequent want of punctuality, the audience were at length indignant, and, among other marks of dissatisfaction, an orange was thrown at him, he picked it up, pretended closely to examine it, walked forward, and with that dry humour which there was no resisting, said—"Humph! This is not a *civil* orange."

These were puns, but the wit of them was in the ready application of them, and the strong effect they produced.

One afternoon, a few weeks before his death, Weston said to a friend, if you will write for me I will make my will. The friend complied, and Weston dictated, not puns, but strong sense and keen satire.

I Thomas Weston, comedian, hating all form and ceremony, shall use none in my will, but proceed immediately to the explaining my intentions.

Imprimis. As from Mr. Foote I derived all my consequence in life, and as it is the best thing I am in possession of, I would, in gratitude at my decease, leave it to the said Mr. Foote; but I know he neither stands in need of it as an author, actor, nor as a man: the public have fully proved it in the two first, and his good nature and humanity have secured it to him in the last.

Item. I owe some obligations to Mr. Garrick; I therefore bequeath him all the money I die possessed of, as there is nothing on earth he is so very fond of.

Item. Though I owe no obligations to Mr. Harris, yet his having shown a sincere regard for the performers of his theatre (by assisting them

in their necessities, and yet taking no advantage thereof, by driving a Jew bargain at their signing fresh articles) demands from me, as an actor, some acknowledgment; I therefore leave him the entire possession of that satisfaction which must naturally result on reflecting that, during his management, he has never done any thing base or mean to sully his character as an honest man, or a gentleman.

Item. I having played under the management of Mr. Jefferson, at Richmond, and received from him every politeness; I therefore leave him all my stock of prudence, it being the only good quality I think he stands in need of.

Item. I give to Mr. Reddish a grain of honesty: 'tis indeed a small legacy, but being a rarity to him, I think he will not refuse to accept it.

Item. I leave Mr. Yates all my spirit.

Item. I leave Mrs. Yates my humility.

Item. Upon reflection, I think it wrong to give separate legacies to a man and his wife; therefore I revoke the above bequests, and leave, to be enjoyed by them jointly, *peace, harmony, and good nature.*

Item. Notwithstanding my illness, I think I shall outlive Ned Shuter; if I should not, I had thoughts of leaving him my example how to *live*: but that I am afraid would be of little use to him; I therefore leave him my example how to *die*.

Item. I leave Mr. Brereton a small portion of *modesty*. Too much of one thing is good for nothing.

Item. As Mr. Jacobs has been a long while eagerly *waiting for dead men's shoes*, I leave him two or three pair (the worst I have) they being good enough in all conscience for him.

Item. Though the want of vanity be a proof of understanding, yet I would recommend to my old friend, Baddeley, to make use of a little of the first, though it cost him more than he would willingly pay for it. It will increase not only his consequence with the public, but his salary with the managers; but, however, should his stomach turn against it as nauseous, he may use for a succedaneum a small quantity of *opinion*, and it will answer the purpose as well.

Item. Mr. Quick has long laboured to obtain the applause of the public: the method he has taken is a vague one; the surest method to obtain his end is to copy *Nature*.—*Experientia docet*.

Item. Miss Younge has had some disputes with the managers, about dressing *her tail*, complaining of the want of fringe: as fringe seems to be an absolute requisite in the ornamenting ladies' tails, and I always loved to see them as they *ought to be*, I leave her therefore the *fringe about the flaps of my waistcoat*, in which I usually played Jerry Sneak.

Item. As I would not forget my friends, particularly old ones, I leave Charles Bannister my portrait, to be taken when I am dead, and to be worn about his neck as a memento to him, that regularity is among the most certain methods to procure health and long life.

Item. Dibble Davies claims something at my hands, from the length of our acquaintance; I therefore leave him my constitution: but I am afraid, when I die, it will be scarcely better than his own.

Item. I leave to the ladies, in general, on the stage (if not the reality, yet) the appearance of modesty: 'twill serve them on more occasions than they are aware of.

Item. To the gentlemen of the stage, some show of prudence.

Item. To the authors of the present times, a smattering of humour.

Item. To the public, a grateful heart.

WEWITZER, Mr.—Is said to be a native of London, where he was brought up as a jeweller, but neglected his business for the imaginary honours of a player's life. After some experience in his newly-adopted profession, he appeared in the character of Ralph, in the *Maid of the Mill*, at Covent-garden theatre, for the benefit of his sister, who was, about the year 1785, a favourite actress and singer. His exertions were successful, and afforded a promise of very useful talents to the stage; in consequence of which he was engaged, and soon distinguished himself as an excellent representative of Frenchmen and Jews. He then went to Dublin for a short time, and performed under the management of Ryder; and on his return resumed his situation at Covent-garden, where he continued till he undertook the management of the *Royalty Theatre*. On the failure of that concern, he became a member of *Drury-lane house*, where he has remained ever since, with the exception of one or two seasons. He also played at the *Hay-market* for several seasons, and is said to have invented some pantomimes.

As a comedian, his powers are very limited. There is only a peculiar line of character that he assumes with success—Foreigners and Jews, and these must be drawn in a vein of dry humour, to accord with his powers. Characters coming under the denomination of old men, do not amalgamate with that kind of talent which

characterizes Wewitzer's style of acting; and parts pregnant with sentiment he cannot assume with any effect: hence Sheva in the Jew, would fail in his hands, though he personates Moses in the School for Scandal, with some success. He is a very clever actor in a confined line, and where he shines, his character must be short, and of an *outré* feature, otherwise he is not seen to advantage.

Wewitzer is one of those performers who is great in little things, and little in great things. It is said, that he has no indifferent share of companionable qualities, and that by a frequent pun, and a happy vein of humour, he can keep the table in a roar.

WHITE, KITTY — A pupil of Mr. Rich's, and during her initiation, Mr. O'Brien, of Drury-lane, gave her some instructions how to perform with propriety the character of Sylvia, Recruiting Officer. One day as he was thus employed, observing that the lady misconceived his directions, and repeated a passage very improperly, he told her it was a *parenthesis*, and therefore required a different tone of voice, and a greater degree of volubility than the rest of the sentence. "A parenthesis!" said Miss White, "what's that?" Her mother, who happened to be present, blushing for her daughter's ignorance, immediately broke out—"Oh what an infernal limb of an actress will you make!—not know the meaning of *prentice*, and that it is the plural number of *prentices*!" This young lady married a Mr. Burden during her summer engagement at Portsmouth, and performed as Mrs. Burden, at Covent-garden, in 1760.

WHITLOCK, Mrs. ELIZABETH—This lady is sister to Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. Having performed at several provincial theatres, she was engaged at Drury-lane in 1783, where she remained about two seasons, playing the second and third-rate parts in tragedy; when she was married to Mr. Whitlock, then manager at Newcastle upon Tyne. On the secession of Mrs. S. Kemble from the Hay-market, in 1791, she became her substitute in a few characters, and again appeared on the same boards in 1801. She is now in London, and appears early this season on Drury-lane boards.

Mr. Whitlock was manager of the Boston theatre, in America.

WILSON, Mr. — This comedian greatly distinguished himself in various country theatres; in consequence of which he was engaged at the Hay-market, and afterwards at Covent-garden, where he sustained old men in comedy with a great portion of public approbation. Too great an indulgence in the follies of the town kept him continually embarrassed, and obliged him to quit London for Scotland, where he performed for some time. He was afterwards arrested, and died in the King's-bench.—He married a daughter of the late Mr. Lee Lewes, whom he left a widow.

WILKINSON, FATE—Late manager of the York and Hull theatres, was the son of the Rev. Dr. John Wilkinson, who was educated at St. Bees, Cumberland, and finished his studies at the University of Oxford.—He was his Majesty's chaplain of the Savoy, where he, mistakingly, continued to solemnize marriages by virtue of his own license, notwithstanding the marriage act of the

26th of Geo. II. for which he suffered transportation. His son, who had long entertained a passion for the stage, now resolved to indulge his inclination, though but seventeen years of age, and consequently rejected a commission in the army, which had been offered him by some of his mother's friends. His first appearance on the stage was for his friend Shuter's benefit, March 28, 1757, in the *Fine Gentleman*, in *Lethe*; which character he repeated April 19, for the benefit of Messrs. Bencraft and Costello; but being still unable to procure an engagement from Mr. Rich, joined Mr. Wignell's summer company at Maidstone, where he performed the first line in tragedy, and received, on his first benefit, one shilling and sixpence, and two pieces of candle! He was, the ensuing winter season, engaged by Mr. Garrick for Drury-lane, but who assigned him the most insignificant business in the theatre, and his first character was *Volscius*, in the *Rehearsal*. Foote, however, having entertained a good opinion of him, procured his leave of absence for six weeks, and engaged him for Ireland, where he appeared in Mr. Foote's *Tea*, with so much success, that the then Irish manager, Mr. Sheridan, engaged him at a salary of three guineas per week. Notwithstanding, on his return to London, he was still discouraged and slighted by Mr. Garrick; but during a summer season had an opportunity of performing at Bath, where he appeared in *Othello*, and "treated Mr. Foote with a dish of his own tea," for the benefit of Miss Morrison, the late Mrs. Hull.—He next visited Portsmouth, where he played several principal characters. His engagement at Drury-lane terminated in 1759, and notwithstanding the manager offered to renew it, and increase his salary, yet he had hitherto behaved to him with so much

duplicit̃y, that Wilkinson preferred a temporary engagement at Covent-garden, where he performed several of Foote's characters, in opposition to him at the other house. Rich now offered him terms for three years, but Wilkinson recollecting the conduct of Garrick, was unwilling to enter into articles for so long a term, and engaged with Mr. Mossop for the Dublin theatre; after which he played at Birmingham and York, and in 1763 was invited to the Hay-market theatre by Mr. Foote, where he appeared in *Shift and Squintum*, in the Minor. He was engaged again for Dublin the succeeding winter by Mr. Barry, the rival manager to Mossop; after which he performed at all the most respectable provincial theatres. He was admitted into a share of the York circuit in 1763, and about a year before the death of his partner, Mr. Baker, expended the sum of five hundred pounds in obtaining Royal Patents for the York and Hull theatres.—He married Miss Jane Doughty, of York, 1768, by whom he had six children, five of whom are living. He was one of the oldest performers on the English stage. As an imitator he was once high in repute, but his talents as an actor were of a very inferior order. He not only mimicked the actors who were distinguished about forty years ago on the London stage, but Foote's manner of imitating them. The last time he made his appearance at Covent-garden theatre, his success was so very indifferent, that he received marks of disapprobation from the audience. He, however, stepped forward, and observing, that he had long possessed "*a little portion of fame*, he hoped they would not then cut him off with *a shilling*." This appeal to the kindness and candour of the audience was delivered with modesty and feeling,

and censure sunk into silent toleration. He published several works on theatrical history, and if he had confined himself to what passed under his observation, without making himself the hero of the tale, no man could have given a more amusing store of theatrical anecdotes; but his books constitute such a mass of tedious egotism, that it is impossible to read them. Though nothing as an actor, and too self-important as a writer, he was a very zealous friend to the stage, highly respected as a manager both by the performers and public, and of great service to the London theatres, having furnished them with several eminent actors and actresses. He died in 1803. He succeeded in the management of the theatres of York, Hull, Leeds, Pontefract, Wakefield, and Doncaster, by his son, Mr. John Wilkinson.

WILKS, ROBERT—Was descended from an illustrious Irish family, and born at Rathfarnham, near Dublin, in 1670, where he received a genteel education. He wrote a masterly hand, and with such surprising celerity, that his genius recommended him to Secretary Southwell, who received him into his office as a clerk, at eighteen years of age: and in this capacity he remained till after the battle of the Boyne, which completed the revolution. His first inclination for the stage is attributed to the following circumstance:—He happened to lodge near Mr. Richards, then an actor on the Dublin stage: and, being intimate with him, used to hold the book while Richards was studying, to observe whether he was perfect in his part. Mr. Wilks used to read the introductory speeches with so much propriety, emphasis, and cadence, that the encomiums bestowed on him by his friend began to fire his mind for

the drama ; and another accidental circumstance confirmed him in the intention of directing his abilities to the stage. Upon that happy and unexpected turn of affairs produced by the battle of the Boyne, the people of Dublin, among other expressions of joy, determined on a play ; but, the actors having been dispersed during the war, some private persons agreed to give one gratis, at the theatre, in the best manner they were able. With very little persuasion, Mr. Wilks ventured to represent The Colonel, in The Spanish Friar ; at Mr. Ashbury's theatre, where the approbation he received from that great master operated so strongly on him, that he quitted his post to a person who afterwards realized a fortune of fifty thousand pounds in it, and commenced player. The first character Wilks appeared in on the public theatre, was that of Othello, which he performed to the approbation of every one but himself. He went on with great success at Dublin for two years, when his friend Richards advised him to try his fortune in England, and gave him letters of recommendation to Mr. Betterton ; by whom, though he was kindly received, he was only engaged at the low rate of fifteen shillings a week. His first appearance on the English stage was in the part of The Young Prince, in The Maid's Tragedy ; a very insignificant character, that required little more than an agreeable person. Betterton performed Melantius ; but, when that veteran actor came to address him on the battlements, the dignity of Mr. Betterton struck him with so much awe, that he had much ado to utter the little he had to say.—Betterton, who had observed his confusion, encouraged him afterwards, by saying, “ Young man, this fear does not ill become you ; for a horse that sets out at

the strength of his speed will soon be jaded." But Mr. Wilks, growing impatient at his low condition, the company being so well supplied with good actors, that there was very little hope of his getting forward, engaged also in another profession, and became an assistant to Mr. Harris, an eminent dancing-master at that time. In this capacity, so favourable to the exhibition of a good figure, he, by the gentility of his address, gained the affection of a young lady, the daughter of Ferdinand Knapton, Esq. steward of the New Forest in Hampshire; whom he married with the consent of her father. He found his finances now very unsuitable to the establishment of a growing family, and therefore pressed hard for an addition to his salary, which every one beside the manager thought he well deserved: but this request not being complied with, he took a more expeditious step for advancement, by accepting the invitation of Mr. Ashbury to return to Ireland; that manager coming over on hearing of his discontent, purposely to engage him. He agreed with Mr. Wilks for sixty pounds a year, and a clear benefit; which in those times was much more than any other performer ever had. —When he went to take his leave of Mr. Betterton, the manager was with him. This great actor expressed some concern at his leaving the company. "I fancy," said Mr. Betterton, "that gentleman," pointing to the manager, "if he has not too much obstinacy to own it, will be the first that repents your parting; for, if I foresee aright, you will be greatly wanted here." Having no competitor in Dublin, he was immediately preferred to whatever parts his inclination led him; and his early reputation on that stage soon inspired him with the ambition of returning, and

shewing himself on a better : nor was it long before his ambition was gratified, and the prophetic words of Mr. Betterton fulfilled ; for the unfortunate death of Mr. Mountford was a sickness to all the genteel comedies at London until his loss could be supplied.—Mr. Wilks therefore was immediately sent to with an offer of four pounds a week ; which being a salary equal to that of Mr. Betterton himself, was too inviting a proposal to be neglected. His engagements at Dublin were, however, too strong to be openly broke through, and he therefore prepared for his journey privately. Mr. Ashbury procured an order from the Duke of Ormond, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to prevent his going ; but, a particular friend giving him timely notice of it, he went secretly to Hoath, where a boat waited to convey him on board, and thus he came safe to England. Upon his first arrival, Mr. Powell, who was now in possession of all the chief parts of Mr. Mountford, and the only actor who stood in Wilks's way, offered him the choice of whatever he thought proper to make his first appearance in ; a favour that was intended only to hurt him : but Wilks, who, from the first, had certainly formed his manner of acting on the model of Mountford, rightly judging it modest to chuse a part of Powell's, in which Mountford had never appeared, accepted that of Palamedes, in Dryden's " Marriage a la Mode : " and here too a fortunate circumstance attended him, by Mrs. Mountford being his Melantha in the same play. (See *Van-bruggen Mrs.*) From this time he grew daily more in favour, not only with the town, but likewise with the patentee, whom Powell, before Wilks's arrival, had treated in what manner he pleased. His merit was at length rewarded by

being joined, in the year 1709, by Queen Anne, in the patent granted to Dogget and Cibber; under whose direction the theatre recovered new life, and prosperity followed their judicious industry. He established his reputation by the part of Sir Harry Wildair, in which the vivacity of his performance was so proportionably extravagant to the character, as drawn by the author, that he was received in it with universal and deserved applause.

As long as he trod the stage, he continued the unrivalled fine gentleman, and by the elegance of his address captivated the hearts of his audience to the very last. But, while his excellence in comedy was never once disputed, he was equally master of that dignity requisite in tragedy; and was as highly extolled, by the best judges, in the different parts of Hamlet; Castalio, in the Orphan; Ziphares, in Mithridates; Edgar, in King Lear; Piercy, in Anna Boleyn; Norfolk, in Albion Queens; the Earl of Essex; Shore; Macduff; Moneses, in Tamerlane; and Jaffier, in Venice Preserved.—In 1714 he lost his wife, and continued a widower seven years; but then married Mrs. Fell, the relict of Charles Fell, Esq. of an ancient family in Lancashire, who survived him. This celebrated actor died the 27th of September, 1732, and was interred in the church-yard of St. Paul's, Covent-garden, where a monument was put over him by his widow. By his own request he was buried at midnight, to avoid ostentation; yet this peculiar honour was paid to his memory, that the gentlemen of the choir belonging to the Royal Chapel, came voluntarily and performed an anthem, prepared for the solemn occasion. He was always the first proposer of any joint charity from

the theatrical stock; and tears were often seen in his eyes at the relation of any misfortune that befel others. When the unhappy Mr. Farquhar died, Wilks took care to bury him decently at St. Martin's in the Fields, and also provided for his orphan daughters, whom he placed out as mantua-makers, and to the last gave them several benefit-plays; by which constant stream of bounty, he raised them above want; so that, in losing him, they lost another parent. There is also another Mr. Wilks, who was likewise a native of Dublin, where he was a favourite actor in the same line of business, particularly Jessamy, in *Lionel* and *Clarissa*. He lately exhibited at the Lyceum.

WINSTONE, RICHARD—Was esteemed the father of the stage, being about three months older than Macklin. He was an *élève* of Quin's, and, though greatly inferior to him in point of theatrical merit, was one of the group distinguished by his friendship, and often admitted to his convivial enjoyments. He once had a quarrel with the manager, and abruptly leaving the London stage, contrary to the advice of Quin, went strolling into Wales.—After two years' absence, on his return from Swansea to Bristol, by sea, he was near being drowned, having met with a storm which stranded the ship, by which he lost all his clothes, and what little money he had in his strong box. In this situation he scrambled up to London, and getting to one of his old haunts about Covent-garden, went to bed, and sulked for two days without ever getting out of it. Quin, by accident, heard of his situation, and immediately calling on the manager, had Winstone put on his usual salary;

and his name actually advertised in the bills for the next day's performance: he then called upon his tailor, who, having Winstone's measure, took him to Monmouth-street, and bought him a full suit of clothes. Thus accoutred, Quin called upon his old friend, whom he found in bed, very melancholy. After some conversation, in which Winstone related all his misfortunes, Quin asked him why he was not at rehearsal? This, at first, astonished poor Winstone, till the other explaining the circumstance, he fell upon his knees with gratitude. "But z—ds, my dear Jemmy," says Winstone, "what shall I do for clothes and a little money?" "As for the clothes," says Quin, "there they are; but as for money, by G—, you must put your hand in your own pocket." Winstone experienced his friend's humanity even in this expression, for, on searching the breeches pocket, he found ten guineas. He resided at the Hot Wells, Bristol, for some years before his death, where he lived partly on letting lodgings, and partly on what he saved in his earlier days. He died Dec. 11, 1788. The performers at Bristol generally gave him a yearly benefit, which, as he had many friends, turned to account. On those nights he spoke an occasional prologue.

WINSTON, JAMES, Esq.—This gentleman is a descendant of Drugo de Balendon, whose son Hamlet, came over with William the Conqueror. The family for their services were created by him Lords of Winston and Trewin, in Gloucestershire. The subject of this article was born in the year 1773, and from the early death of his parents, he was brought up under the care of his grandfather, at whose decease he became

possessed of a very handsome property, and in consequence of the same event, expects the possession of several extensive estates at Winston.

In the days of his childhood, dramatic exhibitions made a favourable impression on his mind, which he constantly employed on subjects connected with theatricals; and while at school, his hours of leisure were wholly occupied in forming and conducting a Lilliputian theatre, which displayed a group of wooden performers, in the support of a whimsical entertainment, the dialogue of which was written and delivered by himself, in concealment.

The amusement of the stage increasing in his esteem as he advanced in age, and receiving all the encouragement his indulgent grandfather could bestow, readily accounts for his early speculation in the property of theatres. In the year 1791, we find him manager of the Richmond theatre, under the assumed name of Neville. This concern turned out as unprofitable to Mr. Winston as it has hitherto been to other adventurers in property of this description. In the following summer he performed in various provincial theatres; and in 1802, made a tour of Plymouth, Weymouth, Margate, and Cheltenham.

In 1793 he purchased the Plymouth theatre for 500*l.* where he occasionally played with great success; but has since sold that property to advantage. During Mr. Winston's summer excursions in various parts of England, he collected, at considerable expence and trouble, the local history of our principal country theatres; and in order to render his literary labours as entertaining as possible to the public, he accom-

panied his narrative with a faithful portrait of each theatre, executed with that taste and knowledge of architecture which would attach credit to the pencil of our most celebrated draftsmen.

The Theatrical Tourist unites a vast variety of biographical anecdotes with its historical matter, and is a species of information which was only to be obtained by a person whose wealth was correspondent with his enthusiasm and indefatigable research.

From the high opinion we entertained of Mr. Winston's History of the Country Theatres, we have published the contents of it, by the author's permission, with such alterations and additions as best accorded with the nature of our publication.

In the year 1804 he embarked a part of his fortune in the Hay-market theatre (see page 154), and from the friendship and unanimity that subsist between him and Mr. Colman, he employs his utmost endeavours in his department as stage-manager, to afford every satisfaction to the public, and support the prosperity of the theatre, which has greatly increased within these three years. Previous to the opening of the Hay-market theatre this last season, these gentlemen, in conjunction with Mr. Tahourdin and Mr. Morris, expended near a thousand pounds in beautifying and improving its public conveniences.

The situation of a manager is by no means enviable; and if an angel were assigned the management of a theatre, he would get enemies in a week.

Refractory spirits are always found in a

greater number in a theatre than in any other establishment. If a performer is not immediately gratified (let his qualifications be ever so humble) the moment his ambition suggests an object of indulgence, which the manager cannot always, consistent with his public duty, gratify, he seldom fails to pour forth a volume of invective against him, and influence, as much as he can, his private connexion, to annoy the object of his hatred.

It is understood that Mr. Winston stands precisely in this situation: the duty he owes to the public, to Mr. Colman, and to his other colleagues, will not at all times enable him to comply with every unreasonable request that is daily made; in consequence of which, *one or two* performers, of indifferent talents, have used their best endeavours to paint him in the unfavourable colours of an angry mind; and though he may have suffered the partial abuse of their private influence, he may laugh at his enemies, while his conduct is governed by justice and temperance, and meets the concurrence of his enlightened partner, Mr. Colman. Should, however, these continued attacks go to any great length against this gentleman, for the honourable discharge of his duty to the public and his partners, we shall feel actuated by the same spirit of independence which has before prompted us to defend the rights of the performer, and commence an analysis of a subject that will not be very pleasant to his opponents. As we neither fear the frown, nor court the smile of any man, and as opposition is a field in which we never dread to enter, the managers of the London theatres shall not be *bullied* with impunity into any thing that does

not accord with their interest and inclination, while we can hold a pen in defence of their property, equity, and truth.

As all persons who appear on a public stage are the fair subjects of remark, and as they are seldom angry with praise, so they have no right to be offended with censure. It often happens, however, that a performer's exertions are not questioned, merely as a professional display of ability, but in consequence of party influence and dislike. Thus it is with Mr. Winston, whose mimic exertions have been made the vehicle of angry criticism, not originating in his inability as an actor, but in disappointments of a private nature. If Mr. Winston is not allowed to rank among the first class of comedians, he certainly does not rank among the last ; and if there are no degrees of merit which are entitled to eulogy, very few performers indeed would have many claims to public favour.—Excellence does not appertain to half the number of the performers who are engaged to entertain a metropolitan audience.

Mr. Winston has repeatedly performed characters at the Hay-market theatre with a considerable share of approbation; and on the indisposition of Mr. Fawcett, he has personated Caleb Quotem, and sang the songs of the part with a very pleasing and happy effect. To support a character of which so great a comedian as Mr. Fawcett is its excellent representative, is a task not the most easy or pleasant for a young actor to perform, yet Mr. Winston personated Mr. Colman's well-drawn portrait with all its appropriate humour, and received the universal approbation of his audience. Confidence is a quality so necessary to the assumption of a cha-

rafter on the stage, that whatever physical and acquired perfections adorn a man, without that essential acquirement he will never arrive at any eminence in the theatrical world; and though modesty is esteemed a valuable ingredient in the composition of the generality of men, it is however no ornament to an actor, and only impedes his progress. If Mr. Winston had less of this diffidence, his powers would appear to considerable advantage: he has talents for the profession of a comedian, and when experience and the indulgence of the public shall have abated his fears, he will rank among the favourite performers of the day.

Mr. Winston unites to a good figure an expressive countenance, and a good voice. As a private gentleman, he possesses several accomplishments, and supports a good moral character. He is united to a very pretty and amiable woman, who appears to possess all the excellent qualities of a good wife and an affectionate mother.

WOFFINGTON, MARGARET.—Was no less celebrated for talents and accomplishments, than for her generosity and appropriate feelings; yet her origin was very humble. Her mother, on the death of her father, kept a small grocer's shop (commonly called in Ireland a huckster's shop) upon Ormond quay; and under this inauspicious circumstance did a woman, who afterwards delighted nations, and attracted the highest private regards, begin her career in life. What first gave rise to the accomplishment of so great a change, the following circumstance will explain.

There was a Frenchwoman of the name of Madame Violante, who took up an occasional residence in Dublin about the year 1728. This woman was celebrated for exhibiting great feats of grace and agility on the tight rope, &c &c. and, as she supported a good private character, her exhibitions were much resorted to at that time by people of the best fashion. Madame Violante varied her amusements to the floating caprices of taste; and as The Beggar's Opera was then the rage over all the three kingdoms, she undertook to get up a representation of this celebrated piece with a company of children, or, as they were called in the bills of that day, "Lilliputian Actors."—Woffington, who was then only in the tenth year of her age, she fixed upon as her Macheath; and such was the power of her infant talents, not a little, perhaps, aided by the partialities in favour of the opera, that the Lilliputian theatre was crowded every night, and the spirit and address of the little hero the theme of every theatrical conversation. A commencement so favourable got her an engagement a few years afterwards at Smock-alley theatre, Dublin, where she soon fulfilled every expectation that was formed of her: and so little did her humble birth and early education bow down her mind to her situation, that her talents were found evidently to lie in the representation of females of high rank and dignified deportment: her person was suitable to such an exhibition, being of size above the middle stature, elegantly formed, and, though not an absolute beauty, had a face full of expression and vivacity; she was beside highly accomplished for the stage, being perfect mistress of dancing and of the

French language, both of which she acquired under the tuition of Madame Violante.

Her reputation on the Irish stage drew an offer from Mr. Rich, the manager of Covent-garden theatre, for an engagement at a very handsome salary, which Miss Woffington accepted, and in the winter of 1740 (when our heroine was exactly twenty-two years of age) she made her first appearance on the London boards, in the character of Sylvia, in the Recruiting Officer; and in the same month she performed Sir Harry Wildair. The annunciation of this part to be undertaken by a woman, excited the curiosity of the public, and more particularly as the character had, for the most part, lain dormant since the death of Wilks (seven years before that time), who was universally allowed the first Sir Harry on the stage. However, this curiosity was fully satisfied in favour of Miss Woffington; it was admitted by the best critics, that she represented this gay, good-humoured, dissipated rake of fashion with an ease, elegance, and deportment, which seemed almost out of the reach of female accomplishments: and her fame flew about the town with such rapidity, that the comedy had a run, and proved a considerable addition to the treasury for many seasons afterwards. However great her reputation in this part, she did not rest it wholly in Sir Harry. In characters of easy, high bred deportment, such as Millamant, Lady Townley, Lady Betty Modish, &c. she possessed a first-rate merit; she likewise excelled in many of the humorous parts of comedy, such as Lady Pliant, in the Double Dealer; Mrs. Day, in the Committee; and others; not in the least scrupling, on these occasions, to convert the

natural beauty of her face to the wrinkles of old age, and put on the tawdry habiliments and vulgar manners of the old hypocritical city vixen.

At what period Garrick became acquainted with Miss Woffington, is not ascertained; by computation, it must be some time before his appearance at Goodman's-fields, or immediately afterwards, as we find them both engaged at the Dublin theatre in the summer of 1742, and both embarking on that expedition in the month of June the same year. Upon their return from Dublin, Miss Woffington lodged in the same house with Macklin; and as Garrick often visited there, there was a constant course of society between the parties: a fourth visitor too sometimes made his appearance there, but in *private*—who was a titled gentleman of distinction, and was much enamoured with Miss Woffington's many agreeable qualifications. It however unfortunately happened one night, that Garrick had occupied Miss Woffington's chamber when his lordship took it in his head to visit his favourite Dulcinea. A loud knocking at the door announced his arrival, when Garrick, who had always a proper presentiment of danger about him, jumped out of bed, and gathering up his clothes as well as he could, hurried up to Macklin's apartment for security. Macklin was just out of his first sleep when he was roused by his friend, who told him the particular cause of disturbing him, and requested the use of a bed for the remainder of the night; but what was Garrick's surprise, when, on reviewing the articles of his dress, which he brought up with him, "in the alarm of fear," he found he had left his *scratch wig* below in Miss Woffington's bed-

chamber. Macklin did all he could to comfort him—the other lay upon tenter-hooks of anxiety all night.—But to return to his lordship: he had scarcely entered the apartment, when, finding something entangle his feet in the dark, he called for a light, and the first object he saw was this unfortunate *scratch*, which, taking up in his hand, he exclaimed with an oath—“On! Madam, have I found you out at last? so here has been a lover in the case!” and then fell to upbraiding her in all the language of rage, jealousy, and disappointment. The lady heard him with great composure for some time; and then, without offering the least excuse, “begged him not to make himself so great a fool, but give her *her wig* back again.” “What! Madam, do you glory in your infidelity? Do you own the wig, then?” “Yes, to be sure I do,” said she. “I’m sure it was my money paid for it, and I hope it will repay me with money and reputation too.” This called for a farther explanation: at last she very coolly said, “Why, my lord, if you will thus desert your character as a man, and be prying into all the little peculiarities of my domestic and professional business, know that I am soon to play a breeches part, and that wig, which you so triumphantly hold in your hand, is the very individual wig I was practising in a little before I went to bed: and so, because my maid was careless enough to leave it in your lordship’s way—here I am to be plagued and scolded at such a rate, as if I was a common prostitute.” This speech had all the desired effect: his lordship fell upon his knees, begged a thousand pardons, and the night was passed in harmony and good humour. Garrick heard these particulars with transport the next morning, praised her wit

and ingenuity, and laughed heartily at his lordship's cullibility.

The connexion between Mrs. Woffington and Garrick soon after this became more united. They kept house together; and, by agreement, each bore the monthly expences alternately. Macklin frequently made one at their social board, which was occasionally attended by some of the first wits of that time, particularly during Mrs. Woffington's month, which was always distinguished by a better table, and a greater run of good company. During this tender connexion they often performed together in the same scene, both here and in Dublin; but when Garrick became manager of Drury-lane in the year 1747, he was not a little embarrassed on finding her one of the articed comedians of his partner Mr. Lacey.

She soon after quitted this theatre for Covent-garden, where for near four years she shone unrivalled in the walks of elegant and humorous comedy. In 1751, she left the London theatres for a very profitable engagement under Mr. Thomas Sheridan, who was at that time manager of Smock-alley house, and who, being an excellent judge himself of theatrical merit, was always liberal in cultivating the growth of distinguished talents. It was at this æra that Woffington might have been said to have reached the acme of her fame.—She was then in the bloom of her person, accomplishments, and profession; highly distinguished for her wit and vivacity, with a charm of conversation that at once attracted the admiration of the men, and the envy of the women.

Although her articles with the manager were but for *four hundred pounds*, yet by four of

her characters, performed ten nights each that season, viz. Lady Townley, Maria, in the Nonjuror, Sir Harry Wildair, and Hermione, she brought *four thousand pounds!* The next year Sheridan enlarged her salary to *eight hundred pounds*, and though it was to be imagined that her force to draw audiences must be weakened, yet the profits at closing the theatre did not fall short of more than three hundred pounds of the first season. Her company off was equally sought for as on the stage, and she was the delight of some of the gravest and most scientific characters in church and state: she was at the head of the beef-steak club, instituted every Saturday at the manager's expence, and principally composed of lords and members of parliament, for many years, where no woman was admitted but herself. Though Mrs. Woffington was now only in her thirty-eighth year, a time of life, generally speaking, which may be called *meridional* in point of constitution and professional talents, her health began visibly to decline; she however pursued her public business till May 17th, 1758, when she performed *Rosalind*, for the benefit of Mr. Anderson. In the fifth act, she complained of some indisposition; she however finished the play, began the epilogue, and got to these words, "If I were among you," &c. when her voice broke, and she could not proceed any further with her author, but in an expression of tremor said, "O God! O God!" and tottered to the stage-door speechless, when she was caught and conveyed home.

The audience, as may naturally be supposed, expressed the most feeling concern for the melancholy event.

Her life was despaired of that night, and for several days; but she so far recovered as to linger till the 28th of March, 1760, when she died.

Many years before her death, perhaps in the *gaiety of her heart*, she made a kind of verbal engagement with Colonel C—, (a quondam innamorata of her's), that the longest liver was to have all: she, however, thought better of this rash resolution, and bequeathed her fortune, which was about five thousand pounds, to her sister; a legacy which, though it greatly disappointed the Colonel (who perhaps might have disappointed her, had it been his turn to go first) was more suitable to the duties she owed to so near and valuable a relation. Her death was considered as a general loss to the stage.

WRIGHTEN, JAMES—Was originally bred a copper-plate printer, but his passion for theatrical performances induced him early in life to quit that employment, and indulge his propensity, by engaging and performing with some respectable provincial companies; in one of which he became acquainted with Miss Matthews, afterwards a pupil to Mr. Griffiths. whom he married, and who long maintained a distinguished rank as a vocal performer at the Theatres Royal and Vauxhall Gardens, an establishment of fashionable resort, which has been greatly improved in every possible way since Mr. Perkins has been manager: his talents and unexampled industry, have raised it to the highest scale of eminence, and placed this national paradise of public amusement in a superior rank to any of a similar kind in Europe.

Mrs. Wrighten, however, eloped from her husband and their children, and afterwards performed

with much celebrity in the theatres of North America, where she died, after being reduced to great distress. He was many years prompter to the theatres of Drury-lane and the Hay-market. He died in April, 1793.

In consideration of his professional merit and abilities, the proprietors of the above theatres gave a night at each for the benefit of his orphan children.

WROUGHTON, Mr.—This gentleman is of a respectable family, who gave him a classical education, and afterwards placed him with an eminent surgeon at Bath, where he acquired notice as an able professional character. The society of theatrical people, and the apparent charms of the drama, however, soon allured the subject of this article from the study of anatomy to that of the passions and foibles of the scenic hero, and he accordingly tried his theatrical powers on the Bath stage, where he met with a flattering reception.

His success at Bath induced him to come to London, and make the stage his profession; before, however, he left that gay city, he married a young lady, a native of Biddeford in Devonshire, at that time a milliner at Bath.

Mr. Wroughton made his first appearance in London at Covent-garden theatre, in the part of Altamont, in the Fair Penitent, which established him as an actor of considerable talents. The advantage of a good education, together with the example of that galaxy of merit which adorned the theatrical hemisphere during the earlier part of Mr. Wroughton's professional career, afforded him the best means of improve-

ment, which shortly obtained for our hero a respectable line of business, and occasionally the first-rate characters. He continued at Covent-garden house till he purchased Mr. King's property in Sadler's-Wells, where he exerted his talents and influence with great success, and satisfaction to the public.

When Mr. Palmer resigned his situation at Drury-lane, in consequence of his scheme at the Royalty Theatre, Mr. Wroughton supplied his place, and appeared for the first time in 1788 on the boards of that theatre, in the character of Douglas, in the tragedy of Percy. Here he supported a variety of characters in a chaste and effective style of acting, and received the honourable rewards due to merit. After he disposed of his concern at Sadler's-Wells, he was deputed stage-manager of Drury-lane theatre, which arduous office he sustained with great ability till he retired from the stage, and went to Bath to spend the remainder of his days, free from the fatigues of a public life. He however did not enjoy his retirement long, before the indisposition of Mr. Aickin, and the death of Mr. Palmer, rendered it necessary for the proprietors to solicit his return; to which he acceded, and again assumed his professional character. It is unnecessary to say, that his reception on the boards of a London stage was in every way flattering to him.

While in the discharge of his professional duties to the public, Mr. Bannister, who was acting-manager, resigned that office, in consequence of which Mr. Wroughton became a second time possessed of the managerial sceptre. It is not the lot of every man of talents to be happy in the

possession of power, and the distribution of right; but it cannot be placed in better hands than those of the above gentleman. He discharges the duties of his office with a conscientious impartiality to all the performers, and enforces the discipline of the theatre with that mild firmness of deportment, which unites with the man of business the accomplished gentleman.

Mr. Wroughton has seen some of the best acting in the last age, and in the application of his experience he is very happy. He personates a great many characters in our old established favourite comedies, with most excellent effect, and always receives that meed of approbation to which great talents and a correct judgment have due claim. His Sir Peter Teazle is greatly entitled to our eulogium: it unites chasteness of delineation with richness which never borders on buffoonery. His personification of Darlimon, in Deaf and Dumb, is as excellent a piece of acting as ever adorned the stage. He colours the various feelings of the character with the nicest discrimination; the minutest shade of a passion he communicates to the audience, whose feelings he keeps in perfect obedience to his story through every part of his character. It is a *chef d'œuvre* in the mimic art, and must rank among the most finished pieces of playing known to the stage.

The manners and habits of Mr. Wroughton as a private individual, are perfectly gentlemanly, and his society and connexions, it is said, are of the first respectability.

YATES, RICHARD.—This celebrated comedian

belonged to Drury-lane and Covent-garden. He kept an open booth at Smithfield during Bartholomew-fair, which scene of riot and low debauchery was then of considerably longer duration than at present ; but he and Shuter were precluded from any longer diverting the rabble in Southwark or Smithfield by an order from the Court of Common Council, of June 17, 1762, directing that Lady Fair, in the borough of Southwark, should not be held for the future ; and that shows, interludes, and other unlawful pastimes, should not be suffered at Bartholomew-fair. He is satirized by Churchill for his defective memory, which occasioned his frequently repeating a sentence two or three times over. He died April 21, 1796, aged ninety.

The day before his decease, he complained to a friend that he had been extremely ill used by the managers of Drury-lane refusing him an *order* ! “ That was unkind indeed, to an old servant,” rejoined the friend. “ Yes,” replied the dying comedian, “ particularly when my admission could have kept no soul *living* out of the house ; for I only requested their order to be *buried* under the centre of the stage, and they were hard-hearted enough to refuse me.”

His brother, a lieutenant in the army, was shot three months after in a dispute relative to Mr. Yates’s house in Pimlico (for which the disputants stood their trial, and were acquitted). His widow made her first appearance on the stage in the “ Grecian Daughter,” at the Hay-market ; and afterwards performed Mandane, in Cyrus ; for Mr. Hull’s benefit, at Covent-garden. On the loss of her husband, she took a benefit at the Hay-market, where she sustained the character of Margaret, in the Earl of Warwick. She then

accepted an engagement in Dublin, where she remained about three seasons, and performed next at Liverpool. February 22, 1800, she appeared at Drury-lane in *Angela*, in the *Castle Spectre*; and was well received. She married a Mr. Ansell, and performed by the name of Mrs. Ansell at Drury-lane in 1802. At the conclusion of the last season she was discharged. She has played but very seldom, we therefore have not had a fair opportunity of judging impartially of her professional exertions: her figure is not inelegant:—She appears an actress far above mediocrity.

YATES, Mrs. ANNA MARIA—Whose maiden name was Graham, wife of Richard Yates, was born, as supposed, at Birmingham, and made her first appearance in Dublin, in *Anna Boleyn*, in Henry VIII. about the year 1752, under the auspices of Mr. Sheridan, who, deeming her abilities very indifferent, was glad to dissolve the engagement by a present. The lady herself thought Mr. Sheridan's opinion very just, and despaired of ever attaining any degree of eminence in the theatrical line; for at that time, though in the bloom of youth, her voice was very weak, and her figure encumbered with corpulence: accordingly, she gave up her theatrical pursuits; but as the early part of her life was marked with unhappiness, it is supposed that necessity urged her to another attempt, as she became a candidate at Drury-lane, February 25, 1754, in the character of *Julia*, the first night of the representation of the tragedy of *Virginia*; when an occasional prologue was spoken by Mr. Garrick, wherein he mentioned the fears and diffidence of a new actress. In this play Mr. Garrick, Mr. Mossop, and Mr. Cibber performed; but it was so indif-

ferent, that it was performed only nine nights. Our heroine, as yet, afforded no promise of excellence, and was dismissed the ensuing season; but on her marriage with Mr. Yates, she was received again by Mr. Garrick the year following.

Her husband was an experienced actor, and to him, no doubt, she was indebted for her theatrical improvement; indeed, a total change took place in her disposition: on her first introduction to the public, she seemed formed of the mildest materials; so much so, as to seem quite unsusceptible of resentment upon any provocation; but, afterwards, she became as remarkable for the impetuosity of her temper; notwithstanding which, she was always a friend. The indisposition of Mrs. Cibber gave her at last an opportunity of acquiring some reputation, and she established her fame by her performance of Mandane, in *The Orphan of China*; which character was intended for Mrs. Cibber. She now became a favourite, and remained so on the death of Mrs. Cibber, in 1765, the unrivalled actress of the day. On Mr. Powell's becoming manager of Covent-garden, Mr. and Mrs. Yates were engaged by that gentleman, the former at ten pounds per week and a benefit. In 1768, a difference arose between Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Bellamy; Mrs. Yates having refused to play Hermione, in *The Distrest Mother*, for Mrs. Bellamy's benefit, in consequence of being obliged to perform two arduous characters the preceding and succeeding nights. This contest produced a paper war between the ladies, wherein Mrs. Bellamy was sarcastically severe; notwithstanding, when her circumstances did require Mrs. Yates's theatrical assistance, she experienced that benevolence which she had before doubted; for this lady's last

performance was for Mrs. Bellamy's benefit at Drury-lane, 1785.

Some few months before the death of Mr. Henderson, it is said that she intended to have united with him in continuing the readings at Freemason's-hall, a task for which she was extremely well qualified, as her chief excellence lay in recitation.—It was likewise her intention to return to the theatre, had not the stroke of death made her *exit* final. Her disorder was dropsical, which had for some time encroached on her constitution, and after much pain and languor, she died at her house in Pimlico, May 1787, aged fifty-nine. Her remains were interred, as she had requested, at Richmond church, those of her father having mouldered at the same place. Great as this actress was, it is remembered that she once performed in 'The Plain Dealer with King, Weston, and Miss Pope, to an audience consisting at the beginning of the play, of four persons only in the whole tier of boxes, about seventy in the upper boxes, eighteen in the pit, and about one hundred in the galleries!!!

YOUNG, Mrs.—'This lady's maiden name was Biggs, sister of the late comedian, Mr. James Biggs, of the Bath theatre. She was born at Debenham in Suffolk, in the year 1775. Intended for the stage from her infancy, she received an education analogous to her views in life. Possessing a neat and elegant figure, a flexible countenance, and an expressive eye, she soon became capable of sustaining the first class of elegant characters in the drama. At the age of thirteen, her first efforts were offered to public attention, in her father's company at

Taunton, and at Barnstaple, in the West of England, where she acquired a considerable share of public favour.

In April 1796, she succeeded Miss Wallis, now Mrs. Campbell, at the Bath and Bristol theatres; and made her first appearance there in the character of Miss Alton, in the comedy of *The Heiress*. In the course of this engagement, her much esteemed talents, together with an excellent private character, obtained for her a wide circle of elegant friends. In consequence of an engagement having been offered her by Mr. Sheridan, she came to town, and made her *debut* on the Drury-lane boards in *The Irish Widow*, in October 1797. Her reception was most flattering; in consequence of which she signed an article for five years, at a handsome salary,

The range of parts which this lady sustained in the course of her professional career, were equally extensive and respectable; the principal of which are, *Rosalind*, *Imogen*, *Cordelia*, *Amanthis*, in the *Child of Nature*, *Lady Teazle*, *Clarinda*, *Cecilia*, *Miranda*, *Julia*, *Miss Tittup*, *Adelaide*, &c.

In 1802 she married Mr. Young, surgeon, of North-Audley-street, and in 1805 she retired from the stage; but from a variety of unpleasant causes, she has again resumed the profession of an actress, and is now playing in the North of England.

As a London actress, Mrs. Young does not rank above the second or third class.—Though there was nothing disgustingly objectionable in her acting, yet it was of that tame kind, that never fastened on the feelings.

YOUNG, Mr.—This favourite performer is the son of Mr. Thomas Young, a surgeon, and was born in Fenchurch-street, on the 10th of January, 1777. He received the rudiments of his education under an eminent private teacher at home, and at the age of nine, accompanied a Danish physician to Copenhagen, who had been some time in this country for professional improvement.

After an absence of a year from his native country, the subject of this article returned with the same gentleman, who came over to unite himself with an aunt of Mr. Young. Our youth was then sent to Eton, where he continued two or three years, and derived all the scholastic benefits that belong to that great seminary. The remainder of his classical education was conducted by the amiable and learned Mr. Bishop, at Merchant Taylor's school.

It is said that in his youth his declamation was distinguished by much point and theatrical effect. At the age of eighteen he was placed in the counting-house of one of the most respectable firms in the city, where he pursued commercial affairs for some time; but the apparent pleasures attendant on the exhibitions of the stage operated to destroy his resolution for business, and he accordingly quitted his situation in about two years. With a view to try the effect of his powers in public, he performed a few times at the Private Theatre in Tottenham-court-road, with very marked and distinguished approbation. In 1798 he was engaged by Mr. Aickin, the then proprietor of the Liverpool theatre, where he made his first appearance in the character of Douglas, under the feigned name of Green. It has been observed by his bio-

grapher, in the Monthly Mirror, "that the oldest performers declared, that they never had witnessed so excellent a first appearance." The success of this first effort, together with his increasing popularity, induced him to relinquish his assumed name. His fame having reached some distance round the country, he was engaged in the winter of 1798, and the following year, as the hero of the Manchester theatre, and in the intermediate summer he returned to Liverpool, where he played every succeeding season while Mr. Aickin held the theatre. In the winter of 1800, 1801, and 1802, he displayed his talents in the leading characters at the Glasgow theatre, with the continued approbation of an admiring public.

On the opening of the New Theatre at Liverpool, in 1802, by Messrs. Lewis and Knight, Mr. Young was engaged, where he continued every winter to support an extensive line of business, with the most approved success. In October of the same year, Miss Grimani, from the Hay-market house, became a member of the above theatre; to whom he was married at Liverpool, on the 9th of March, 1805. In October of that year he purchased Mr. Bellamy's share in the Chester theatre, where he and his wife enjoyed the patronage and respect of the public, and at which place he remained until he came to London.

In 1806 he suffered an irreparable loss in the death of his amiable companion, who, shortly after conferring on Mr. Young the title of father, fell a victim to a biliary fever. On the 22d of June, 1807, he appeared on the Hay-market boards, in the arduous character of Hamlet.

Of the great merit of his delineation, much

may be said ; it is not one of those common kind of things which occupies public attention for a night, and is forgotten. The part of Hamlet requires a representative with more qualifications than accompany the ordinary purposes of the day : his person must not be inelegant ; his attitudes must correspond with his figure, and advance it into public admiration ; otherwise his misfortunes, even with all the beauties and majesty of Shakspeare's language, will not interest the audience. The voice of the actor must also be playful, and possess variety. It has to run from colloquial trifles to pathos and sublimity of reflexion. The man who is not a scholar is not likely to shine as the representative of Hamlet ; and a mere scholar would also fail. He must possess the ability to pourtray a great variety of passion, and the sudden transition of feelings peculiar to the character under the various impressions to which the progress of the play gives birth.

Mr. Young's person appears naturally good, and his features flexible and expressive. His face, however, wants discipline, if we may be allowed the term. A man by study may make a face actually expressive, obedient to all the feelings of the soul, and as he employs his features first in expressing the simple emotions of the mind, he will soon find his muscles relax or brace, according to the feelings that stimulate their motion.

This gentleman's great defect in the professional application of his features, is the continued contraction of his brow in passions which require an expression of force, and in which his brow should be raised, to emit all the vigour and expression of his eye. This may be con-

sidered a waspish kind of criticism, and a nicety on which remark is unnecessary; but with us, the judicious application of an actor's face is almost every thing: it constitutes one of the grand qualities of fine acting, and the performer who has not the advantage of expressive features, may be useful in the group, but he never will be eminent. That Mr. Young has the power of correcting the error of which we complain, is most certain: we have therefore not mentioned it with a view to injure him, but to remove a defect, which, when got rid of, will shew his descriptive powers to considerable advantage. His voice is powerful and melodious, and he appears to employ it in general under the regulation of a good ear. If a performer's defects are not mentioned, the end of criticism is not answered; we therefore take the liberty of observing, that Mr. Young's attitudes require his studious observance. Though his action is not redundant, nor to be considered vulgar, yet it is subject to many breaks, which offend the eye, and lessen that elegance of deportment essential in a tragedian. This is also a fault which an acquaintance with the London stage will no doubt remove. It is, however, no ill compliment to Mr. Young, to mention so few errors, and those of a nature easily corrected.

It is a little surprising, that a young man who has been obliged in a country theatre to take all descriptions of characters, at perhaps an immediate notice, and only a few hours allowed for the study of each, should appear before a London audience with such professional requisites as accompany our hero. To be great in the higher class of character, requires time and considerable reflexion to render a performer sa-

tified with himself, and easy in his assumption of a Macbeth, a Hamlet, or a Sir Edward Mortimer.

Mr. Young has however appeared without these advantages; and when the comparative leisure of a London engagement shall have given him time for the due consideration of his various characters, he will doubtless stand before the public in a new and superior point of view.

If we were inclined to sacrifice truth, in order to shew our approbation of Mr. Young's representation of Hamlet, and say it was superior to Mr. Kemble's personification of that character, such praise would be injudicious, as well as untrue. Mr. Kemble's Hamlet is one of the finest things, in scenic description, that ever adorned the stage. But though our hero's performance of Hamlet is comparatively inferior to Mr. Kemble's assumption of the part, yet it is positively an excellent piece of acting, and highly creditable to him as a man of genius and a scholar. He forms a number of beautiful and affecting pictures, from his masterly illustration of the text. Both before and after the closet scene with his mother, he evinces much original talent, and in the interview with his parent he is surprizingly great. The variety of light and shade he displays in his delineation of the Royal Dane, distinguish him as an actor of the first class. He has doubtless received some valuable instructions from the richly-stored mind of Mr. Colman, whose genius, taste, and classical attainments must, when imparted to a young actor, be of the highest value; hence we account for Mr. Young's able support of Sir Edward Mortimer, and several other characters which have shewn him to great advantage, and added to his

well-earned celebrity in Hamlet. This gentleman has also appeared in Rolla, and animated the Peruvian with a great portion of genuine feeling and original talent.

As a private gentleman, Mr. Young is distinguished by his elegant manners and amiable disposition.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 787, line 5, for England *read* Holland.

Page 976, line 32, for affliction, *read* reflection.

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